

156-PAGE XMAS DOUBLE ISSUE

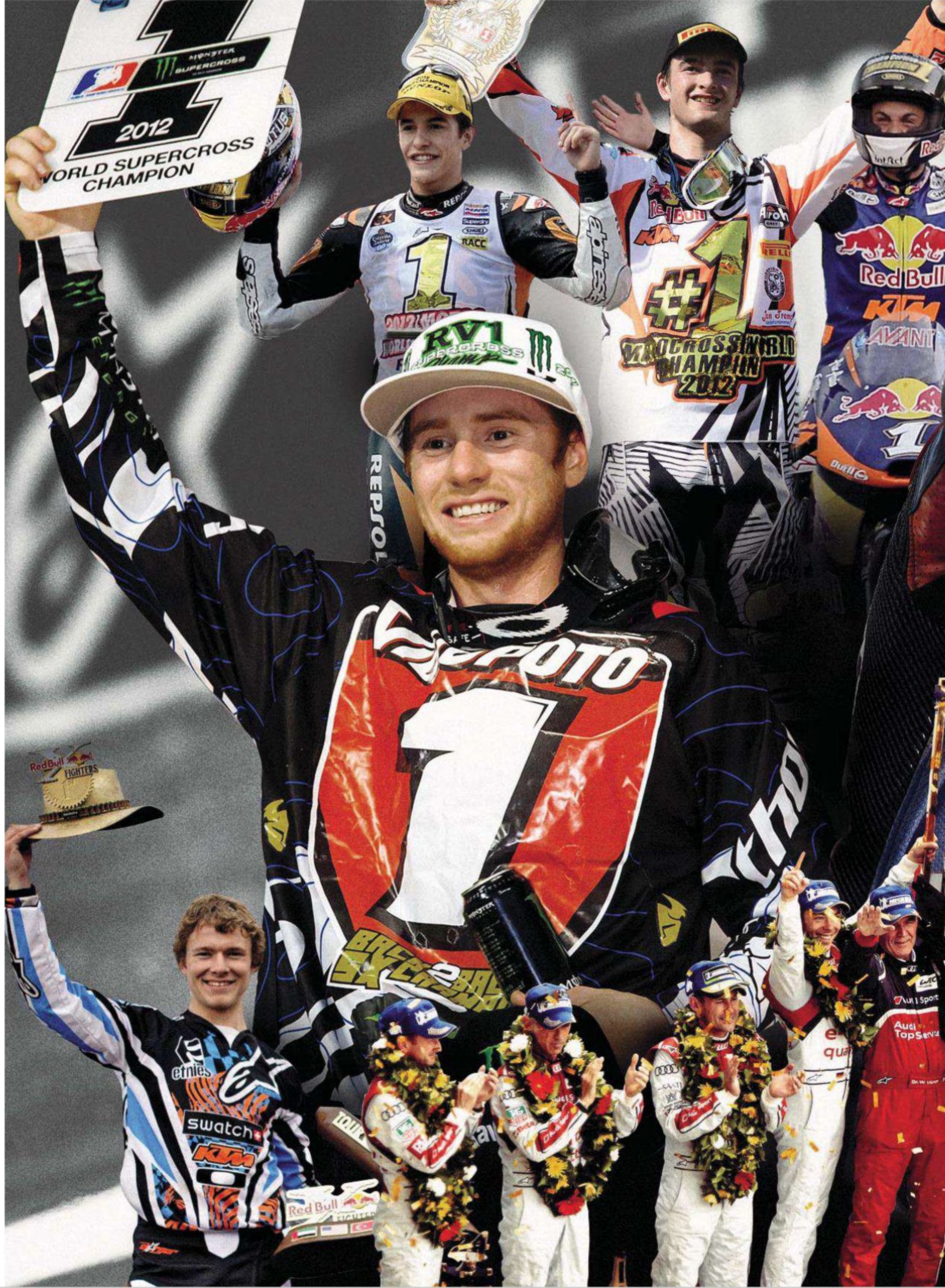
# AUTOSPORT

DECEMBER 20-27 2012



WHO IS NUMBER ONE?

# The top 50 drivers of 2012



2012  
WORLD SUPERCROSS  
CHAMPION

REPSOL  
1

#1  
WORLD SUPERCROSS  
CHAMPION  
2012

Red Bull

KTM

AVANT

Red Bull  
FIGHTERS

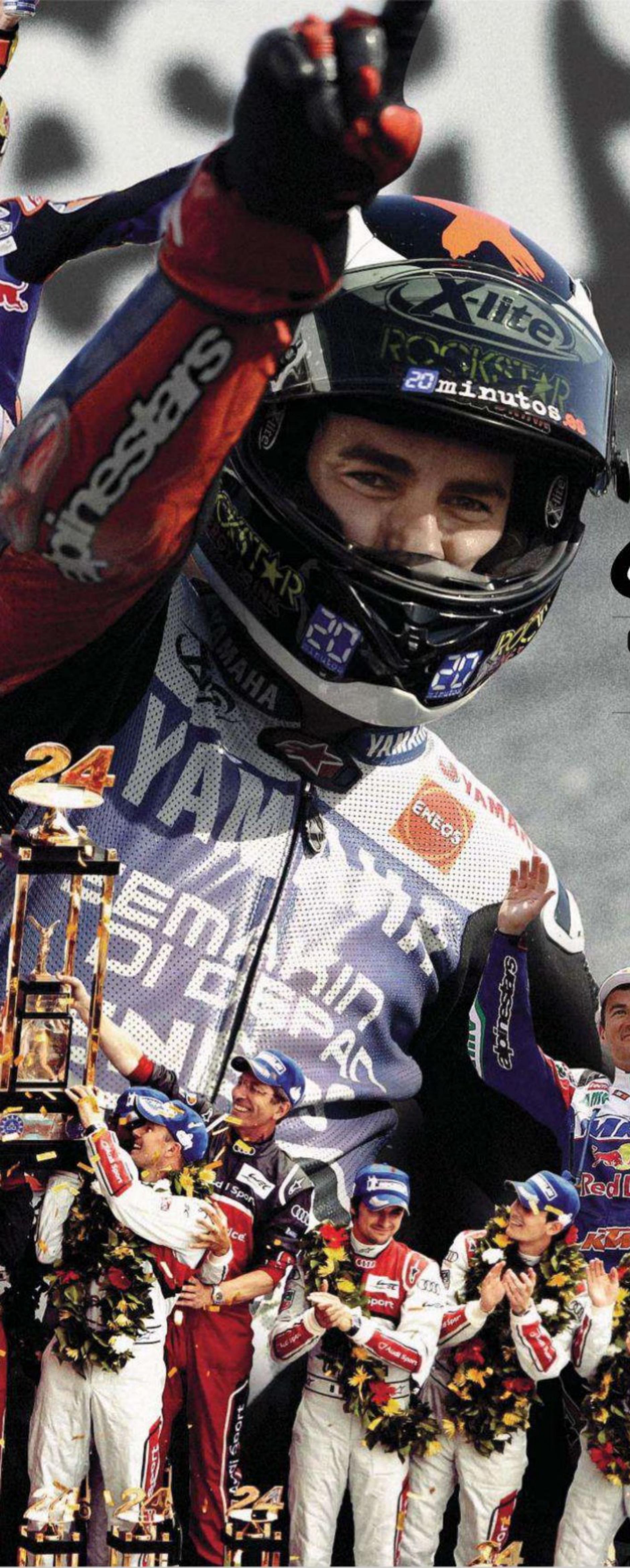
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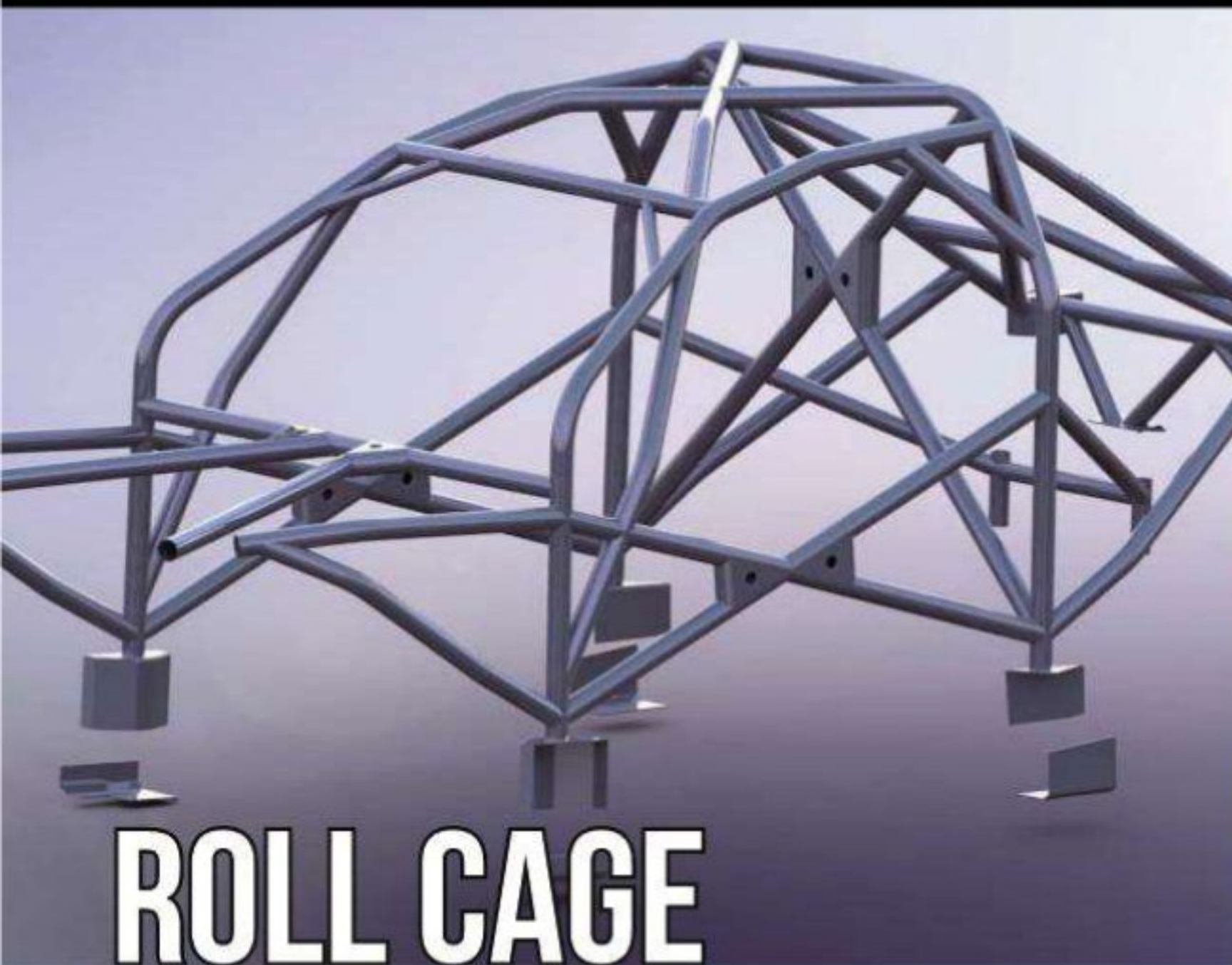
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**AUTOSPORT.COM**

Up-to-the-minute news and reports from F1, WRC and more. Subscribe for must-read opinion, stats and images

**"Unfortunately I am not able to secure a seat with a competitive F1 team for 2013"**  
**LET'S HOPE KAMUI KOBAYASHI IS BACK ON THE GRID IN 2014**

**COVER IMAGES:**  
LAT; STOCKMAN/GETTY; VESSELY/MCKLEIN



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### SCHUMACHER v 2.0

The winning machine who craved a winning machine

So, the second career brought no titles, no wins. But how does the man himself explain his three years of Mercedes? **SCARLETT JOHNSON** attempts to place the puzzle of Schumi

**M**ichael Schumacher is sitting in the back of a limo, talking to Mark Hughes and Schuey. He's been in the back of a limo before, but this time it's different. He's been in the back of a limo before, but this time it's different. He's been in the back of a limo before, but this time it's different.

### Hopefully I won't be a driver that is talked about for incidents in 2013

Romain Grosjean, who talks to **SCARLETT JOHNSON** about the 2013 season that will make or break his F1 career

#### GROSJEAN IN 2012 BY NUMBERS

10-9	DRIVER RATED
8	POINTS
96	DRIVER RATED
1	BEST FINISH
3	PODIUMS
803	LAPS COMPLETED
(BEST OF THE REGULAR DRIVERS)	

**H**ow does it feel to be back in the driver's seat for the 2013 season? Romain Grosjean, who has been out of the sport since 2010, says he's "excited and nervous". He's been out of the sport since 2010, says he's "excited and nervous". He's been out of the sport since 2010, says he's "excited and nervous".

### SEASON REVIEW 2012

## Marcus Pye 2012: it's a wrap!

AUTOSPORT's voice of club motor racing

**Marcus Pye saw a wide variety of action in 2012. Here he takes a look back at his 2012 highlights**

**Aged 17, Dennis - who still didn't drive on the road - showed ice-cool confidence in each discipline**

**"More standalone races in 2013 should further enhance 1000cc F3's profile"**

**TRIPLE 8 AND FORTEC TO GO SPORTSCAR RACING**  
Big teams commit to GT3 programmes for next year

**CLUB-LEVEL CLIO SERIES LAUNCHED**  
Renault one-make racer gets second series for 2013

**NATIONAL RACING CHAMPIONS 2012**  
All the club series winners, from the BARC to SEMSEC

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## POLE POSITION

# So, how do we work out AUTOSPORT's 'festive' 50?



**IT'S CHRISTMAS! THE TOP 50 DRIVER** rankings return to take centre stage in our festive double issue. I'm often asked how we come to our conclusions, so here's how it works: our top writers submit their top 15s, and these are ranked via a points system to form the basis. Then the senior staff sit down, talk about it (over a few pints) and, after everyone's had their say, we decide that my opinion was right!

It's always the most enjoyable edition of the year to produce, and we've settled on a blend of hard-hitting Formula 1 stories – including Mark Hughes's amazing exclusive interview (in the back of a limo!) with Michael Schumacher – to tearing around Donington racing an F3 car against a bike and much, much more.

Never mind Bradley Wiggins, we speak to our own pedal-powered sports personality of the year, Alex Zanardi, and take an in-depth technical look at his Dallara-built handbike.

We hope you have a great Christmas, and don't forget our first issue of 2013 – a Graham Hill 'legends special' – on sale January 3.

*Charles Bradley*

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PODCAST



PICTURES OF THE YEAR

## Hamilton and Alonso: rough ride at Spa

This is the first-corner moment, triggered by Lotus driver Romain Grosjean, that world championship protagonists Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso were sent crashing out of September's Belgian GP. Memories of the year, [p79](#).

Pic: Robertson/Getty Images





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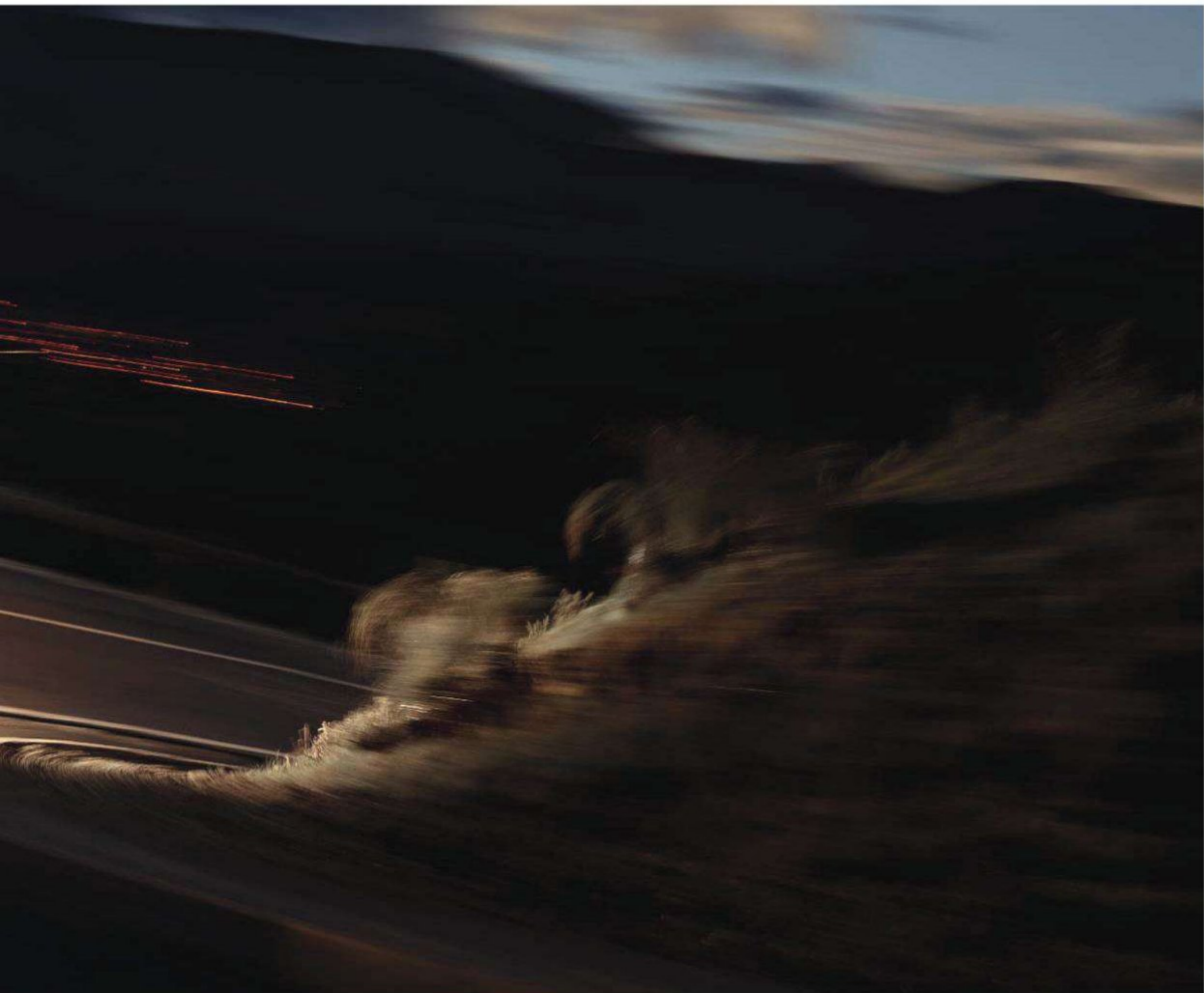
## **Two impressive red lines.**

### **The new 911 Carrera models.**

The redline of a Porsche 911 has always been impressive. For almost 50 years now, each new generation has pushed the boundaries of performance further and further. The new 911 Carrera 4 models are no exception. As well as their legendary all-wheel drive handling, they feature broad shoulders, making for a striking presence.

And the iconic red LED light strip across the rear, means other road users can now appreciate the red line of a 911 too.

**To find out more visit [www.porsche.co.uk/redlines](http://www.porsche.co.uk/redlines)**



Model shown is a Carrera 4S Coupe at £88,774.00 including first year road fund licence and first registration fee. Fuel consumption figures for the new 911 Carrera 4S Coupe in mpg (l/100km): Urban 19.9 (14.2); Extra Urban 37.7 (7.5); Combined 28.5 (9.9). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km) 234.



**PORSCHE**



# HAUG: Schumacher was capable of winning

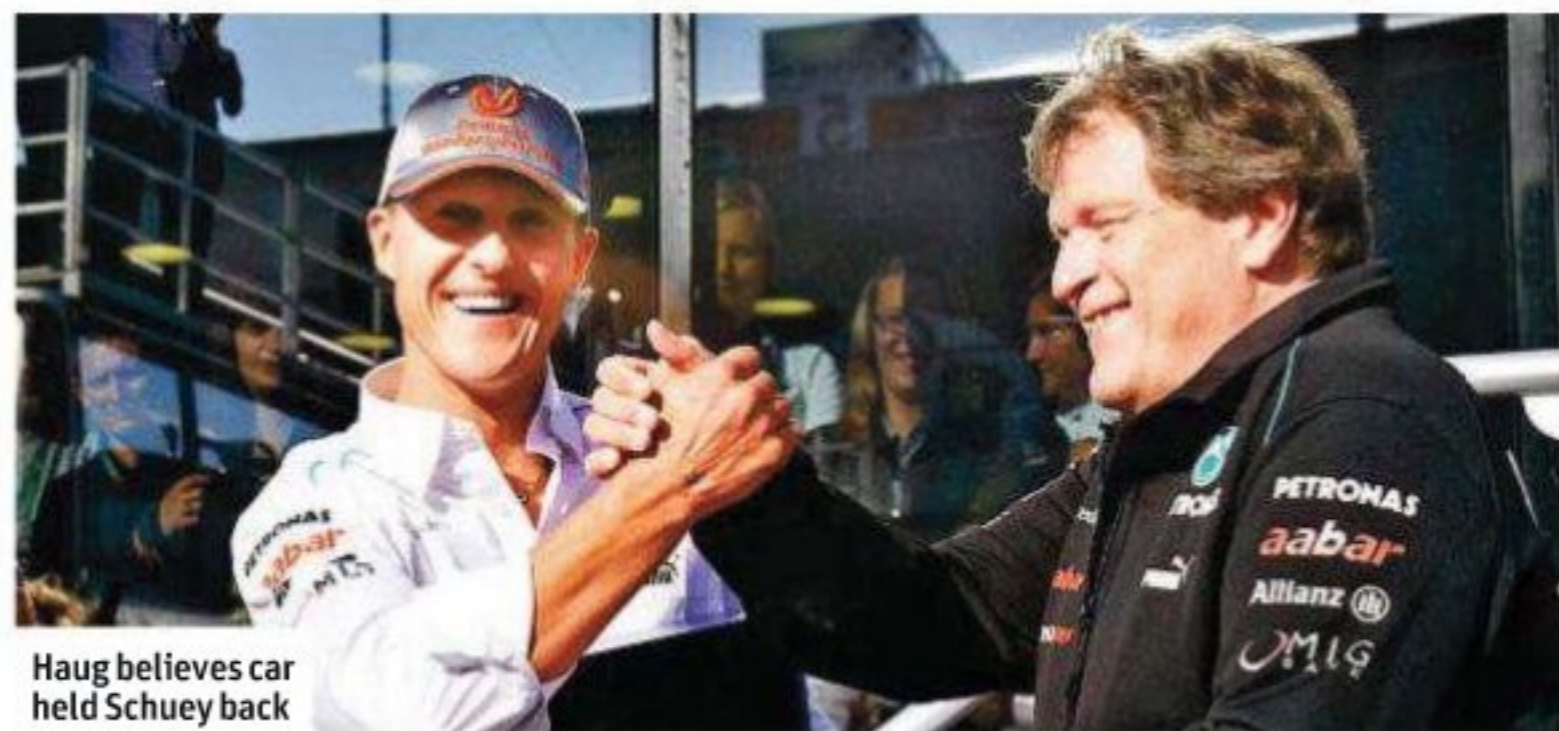
Second career was held back by machinery, not ability, reckons departing Merc chief Norbert Haug

**O**utgoing Mercedes motorsport boss Norbert Haug is adamant that Michael Schumacher would have been a frontrunner over the past three years given a stronger car.

Schumacher quit F1 for the second time at the end of this season after three difficult campaigns with Mercedes during which he only made the podium once, in this year's European Grand Prix at Valencia. But Haug has no doubts that the seven-times world champion, who turns 44 in January, still had it in him to be a regular contender for wins and podiums had Mercedes done a better job with its machinery.

"If he had been driving a McLaren-Mercedes type of car, then I am sure Michael would have been performed and been in the top three, along with Nico [team-mate Rosberg]," Haug told AUTOSPORT.

"You saw what happened when the car was right. He posted the pole position time in Monaco and you do not get that as a present. Michael could also have been a very strong



Haug believes car held Schuey back

force in the Chinese Grand Prix."

Haug's reference to China reflects that the team believes it could have had a one-two finish there. Instead, Schumacher was prevented from having a chance to beat Jenson Button's McLaren when his wheel was not properly attached during his first pitstop, forcing him out of the race. This misfortune was symptomatic of Schumacher's third season with Mercedes. It was the strongest campaign of his comeback on performance, but was his worst

in terms of points scored.

There were occasions when Schumacher showed the level of performance needed to win races, relative to the pace of his car. His Monaco qualifying lap should have set the stage for a race-leading performance, but for the five-place grid penalty that was already hanging over him.

He matched team-mate Rosberg 10-10 in qualifying in 2012 and, with

mechanical misfortune eliminated, would likely have scored a similar number of points.

But ranged against that were the mistakes and bad weekends that suggest Schumacher might have struggled to be a consistent frontrunner. His clash with Williams driver Bruno Senna in Spain and a similar incident when he rear-ended Jean-Eric Vergne's Toro Rosso in Singapore were symptomatic of a lack of judgement when racing with other cars. This characterised much of his return since 2010.

That capacity for mishaps would surely have prevented him being a credible world championship contender in his final season, even though there would have been days when he was able to add to his tally of 91 grand prix wins.

The German cited the lack of testing as one of the reasons for taking a long time to hit form on his return. During 2010, he was

### DID YOU KNOW?

Schumacher registered the seven worst finishing positions of his F1 career during his comeback. Prior to the start of his Mercedes stint, his worst finish was 12th in the 2005 Chinese Grand Prix.

**AUTOSPORT SAYS...**

**EDD STRAW**  
F1 EDITOR

@eddstrawF1



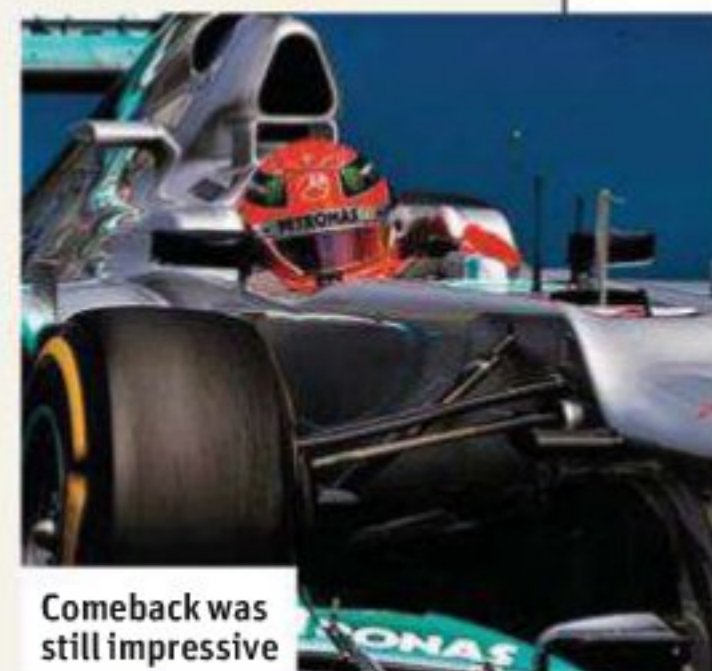
**S**uccess? Failure? Or somewhere in between? It probably depends on where you set your goalposts. By Michael Schumacher's own lofty standards, his comeback was a failure. He targeted the world championship and retired for a second time with a single podium finish. But was it ever realistic to expect him to set the world alight as he had done in his pomp? No.

After three years away, and in his fifth decade, he was always going to be up against it. But what he was able to do was, in often-mediocre machinery, show that he could still cut it as an F1 driver. Not a great one, certainly, but a decent one. As sporting comebacks go, this was no Bjorn Borg-esque disaster.

This year's Monaco Grand Prix ultimately defines Schumacher's comeback. He topped qualifying, only to be busted back to sixth as a result of a penalty for cack-handedly clattering Bruno Senna in the preceding Spanish Grand Prix. But even had he started on pole and retained the lead during the pitstops – and

there's no reason why he wouldn't have done, for the Mercedes was a strong car on the streets of the Principality – he would almost certainly have retired with the fuel-pressure problem that forced him out of the race anyway.

It just wasn't meant to be for Schumacher v2.0. But never forget that he remained a reasonably competitive grand prix driver long after most hang up their helmets.



Comeback was still impressive



Merc did not produce consistent winning car

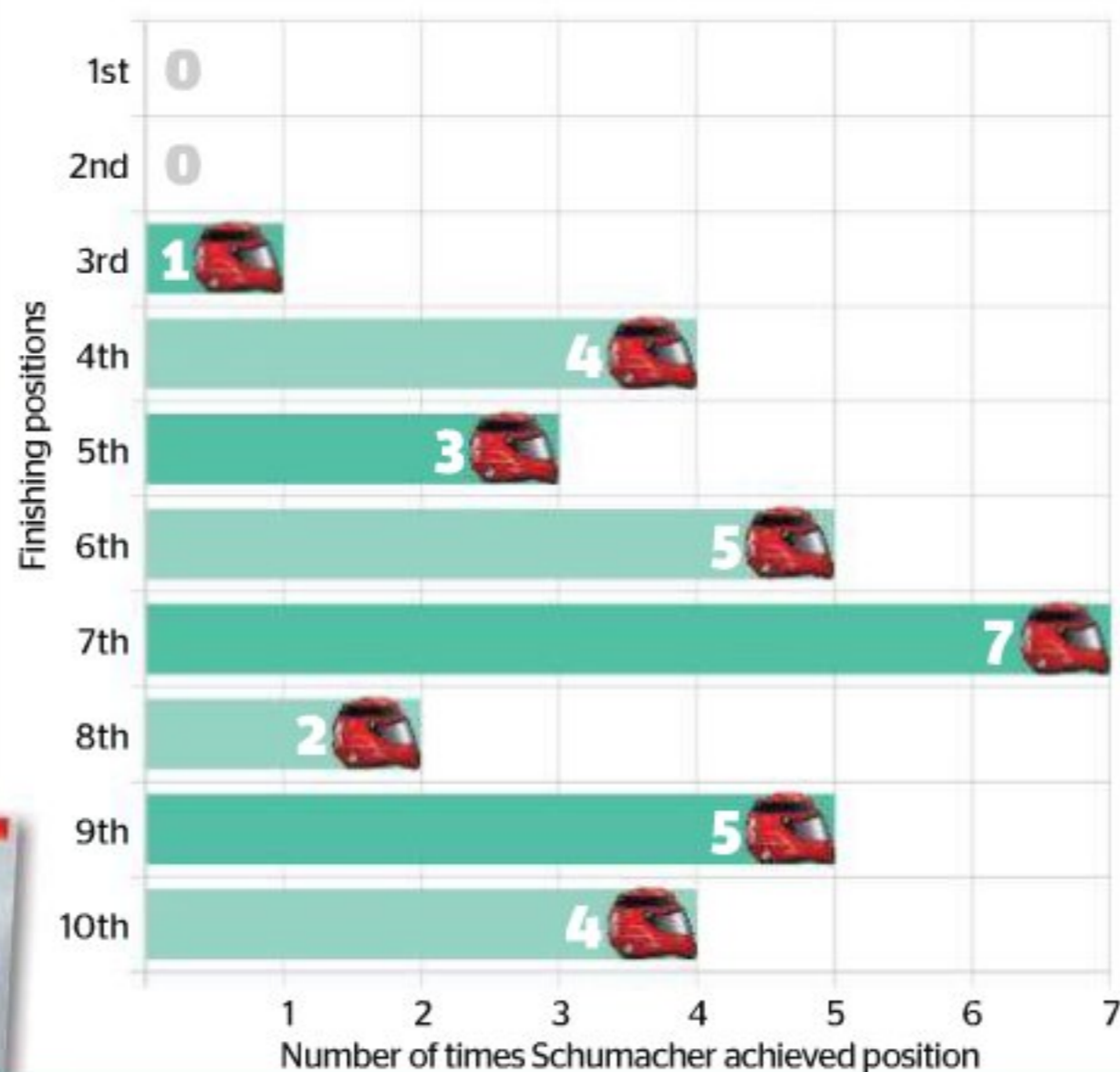
comprehensively outperformed by Rosberg. He improved the following season before getting on broadly level terms with his fellow German this year. But in China this year, where Mercedes finally claimed victory, it was Rosberg who had the upper hand.

Schumacher admitted at the end of the season that his comeback did not work as was hoped. When his return was announced, he had set his sights on the world championship, but he has declared himself satisfied with his comeback.

"I tried to end that mission successfully," said Schumacher. "It didn't work this time, but I'm quite happy to finish from here and go for a different life again."

**SCHUMACHER'S SECOND COMING**

Michael Schumacher's three-year Formula 1 comeback didn't produce the results expected of him. Here are his points finishes since returning to the sport for the 2010 season.



**P28**  
**SCHU**  
**EXCLUSIVE:**  
**WHY COMEBACK**  
**DIDN'T WORK**



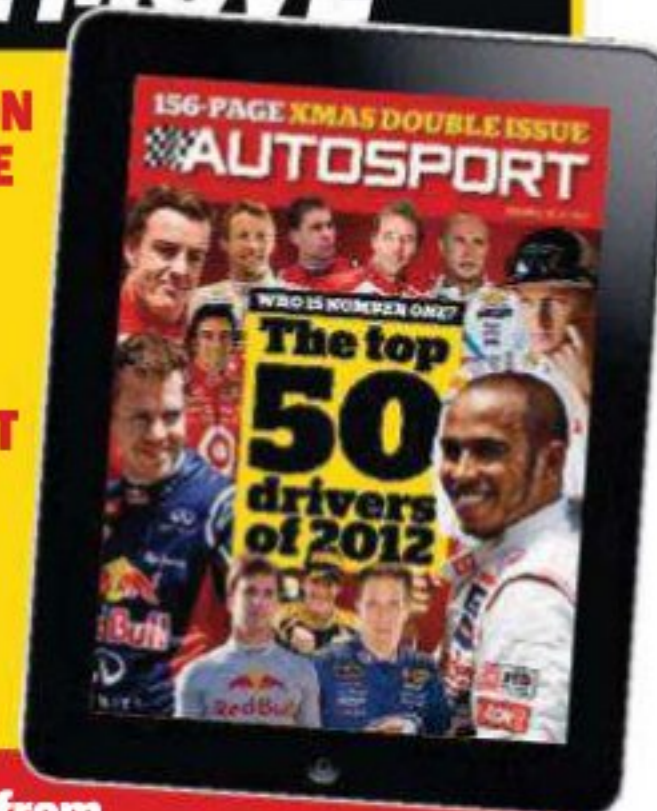
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# “Hopefully I won’t be a driver that is talked about for incidents in 2013”

Romain Grosjean, who Lotus confirmed as its second driver for next season on Monday, talks to EDD STRAW about the 2013 season that will make or break his F1 career



## How does it feel to still have the support of the team after this year’s problems?

It’s very good. I feel really at home in the team, especially at Enstone [the team base]. And on the race weekends it’s the same story. That’s very important for me, to grow a good relationship so we’re able to deliver what we need to deliver.

## Lotus team principal Eric Boullier has played a key role in your career since the end of your first half-season in F1 in 2009. How important has he been to you?

After 2009, there were some tough times and we had to get everything right. Eric and Gravity [Sports Management] were a big help. I tried to come back to F1, it worked and I returned in 2012, showing some good speed but also making some



Boullier (r) nurtured Grosjean back to F1

mistakes as well. But we are still together and there is faith and confidence on both sides. From this point, we can hopefully move on to a good future.

## Does the winter break offer you the chance to analyse in more depth your season and start

## next year as a better driver?

Yes, it’s clearly the aim of the winter. It’s hard during the season to have a break or the time to think about everything you’ve done. To be honest, after the race ban [from the Italian GP] it was quite hard to recover and come back and go through normal races. It was a bit harder than I

expected to recover from that. There’s a good break in the winter, analysing, trying to work on it. The aim is to come back stronger.

## You had a few incidents in GP2 early in 2011, but after the lessons learned at Valencia you seemed to emerge as a better all-round driver, playing the long game in races and winning the championship easily. Is what you are going through now a similar process?

It’s pretty similar. It’s always hard to understand exactly what’s wrong and what’s right in the mind of the driver. The head makes a lot of things in motor racing and it’s hard sometimes to put it right. What happened in GP2 is a good example to remember and to work from there by saying that even if we are in a losing position at the beginning,

## GROSJEAN IN 2012 BY NUMBERS



**8**  
RETIREMENTS

**10-9** QUALIFYING RECORD VERSUS KIMI RAIKKONEN

**POINTS**  
**96**  
1 STOP/GO PENALTY

2 FIRST-LAP RETIREMENTS  
**BEST FINISH**  
**2<sup>ND</sup>**

**1** RACE BAN  
FASTEST LAP **1**  
**3** PODIUMS  
BEST QUALIFYING **2<sup>ND</sup>**

**803 LAPS COMPLETED**  
(FEWEST OF THE REGULAR DRIVERS)



Grosjean won the RoC last weekend

we can play the long-distance race and go for it when we have the momentum. That's easy to do when everything goes right and everything is under control and you don't have some extra pressure. Let's try to remember how it was, what I did in GP2 and do the same next year.

**People talk a lot about the number of incidents you were involved in this year. Is that frustrating for you because not all of them were your fault?**

Yes, sometimes it has been, but on the other hand I was in the car, I was in the middle of the pack when those circumstances happened. It's

sometimes a cycle that goes wrong and now there's a new season, a new start and things will be different. Hopefully I won't be a driver that is talked about for incidents.

**It seemed this year that risk assessment was a weakness, for example with the contact with Pedro de la Rosa in Q1 at Interlagos when you tried to pass him at the kink by the pit entry. Do you think that's fair, and what are your thoughts on improving in that area?**

Yes. It's hard sometimes to judge things and sometimes everything goes wrong, sometimes everything goes right. Yes, risk assessment will be a little bit changed. Judgement comes partly with experience and partly with work, so now it's time to put the work and the experience together.

**Last year was your 'real' rookie season in F1 – you described yourself as "half a rookie". Everything is surely set up for a breakthrough year next season...**

Yes, I think it honestly can be. A first season is not easy, especially after the break from F1 that I had. When you restart, you have to learn the cars, the tracks, the engineering side. But next season, we will go to Melbourne and have a set-up to improve from. That will help and it will feel different. I'm not a rookie anymore. I've got 19 grands prix of experience [from 2012] and that allows me to see things differently, use my experience and really go for it. Why not a breakthrough season?

**P21 RACE OF CHAMPIONS REPORT**

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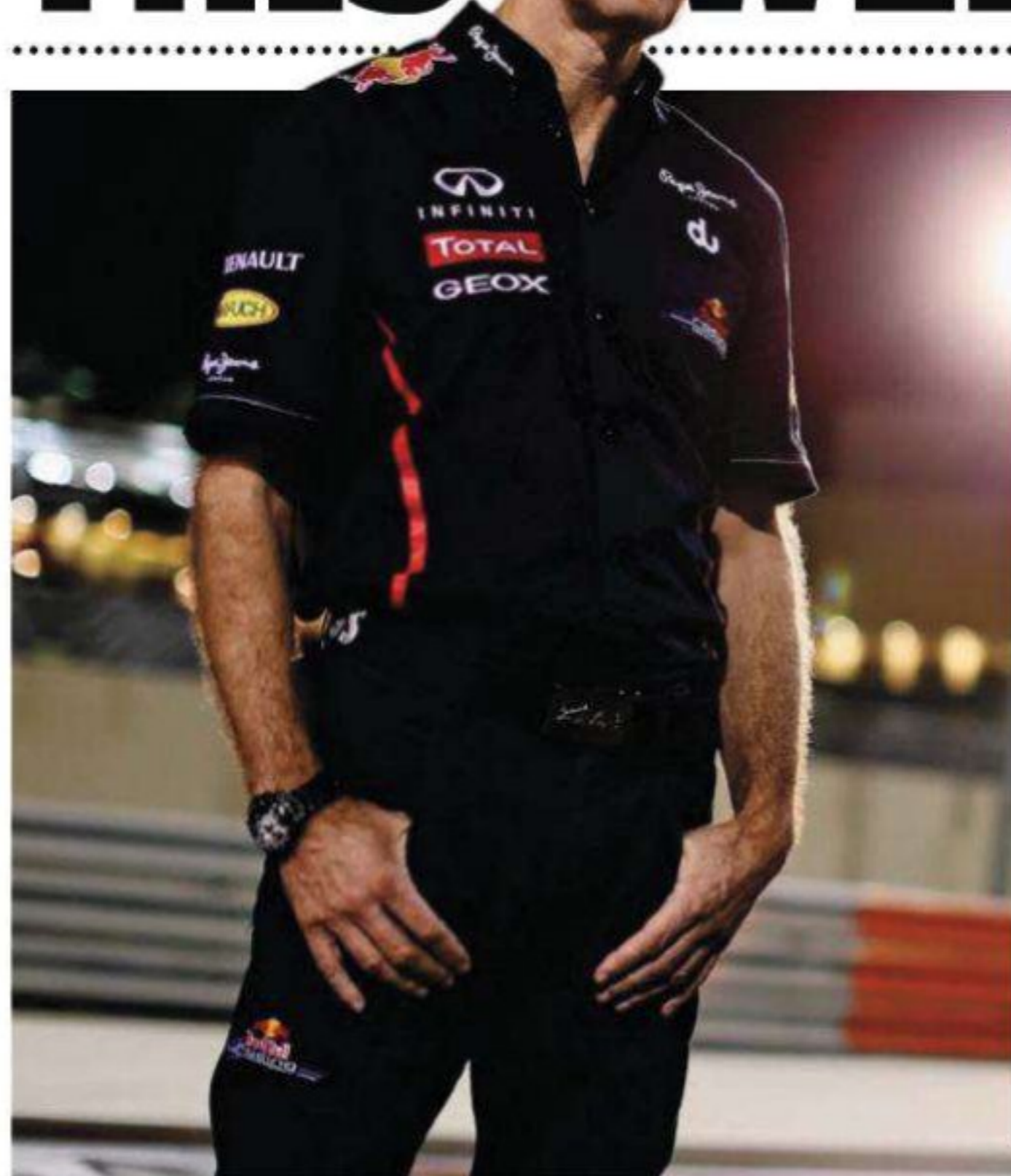


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# THIS WEEK IN F1



“The car, of course, was using the regulations to the edge. That, to me, is what you should do in Formula 1. There’s no such thing as the spirit of the regulations, it’s the black-and-white print of ‘you can’t do this, you can do that’”

Adrian Newey on his approach to F1 car design



# 10

Number of teams that Bernie Ecclestone claims he would like to see on the grid to make things “easier to handle”



## FORCE INDIA NEEDS TIME

Force India driver Paul di Resta believes that the £50 million that will be spent on improving the Silverstone-based team’s technical facilities will not show their full on-track benefit until 2014. “You will get true benefits for it, but I think you see that for years to come as opposed to the near future,” said the Scot.

## NO SEAT FOR KOBAYASHI

Kamui Kobayashi has abandoned hope of landing a race seat in 2013 after missing out on the Lotus drive to Romain Grosjean.

The Japanese claims to have been able to bring a budget of at least €8 million and is now focusing on securing a drive for 2014.



## GILLAN LEAVES WILLIAMS

Williams chief operations engineer Mark Gillan has left the team, with family reasons cited for his decision. He remains under contract until the end of the year.



## BRAWN UPBEAT

Mercedes team boss Ross Brawn says his squad will be in a stronger position at the start of next season with Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg than it was at the end of 2012. “We created a car that was reasonable, but we didn’t keep it progressing strongly enough,” he said. “We’ve got well-justified optimism that we’re going to be better next year.”



## CHILTON GETS F1 SEAT

Marussia has announced that GP2 race winner Max Chilton will race for the squad next year, as predicted by AUTOSPORT (September 27). The Briton was the team’s reserve driver for the final six races of 2012.



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## MARK HUGHES GRAND PRIX EDITOR

Kamui Kobayashi has recently been branded Japan's best-ever F1 driver – by Alan Jones no less. But there was another man who, had fate dealt a different hand, could have beaten him to it

Last week 1980 world champion Alan Jones reckoned Kamui Kobayashi to be Japan's best-ever F1 driver, and certainly his 2012 achievements of a front row at Spa and a podium at Suzuka – two drivers' circuits – lend a lot of credence to that view.

He's an interesting driver, a bit of an enigma in some ways. There hangs over him a perception that he's wild, but he's actually not.

That silly first-lap incident with Jenson Button and Nico Rosberg in Korea aside, he's invariably one of the safest pairs of hands on the grid and over the three years of his F1 career his finishing record is excellent. The perception probably comes from some of those wildly exciting dives down the inside under braking – but he pulls them

off. He is a terrific overtaker and his taste for having a go at passing on track was apparent right from the beginning – when Toyota had him stand in for the injured Timo Glock in the last two races of 2009.

Takuma Sato had a similarly attacking attitude – and was the first Japanese driver to qualify on the front row of a grand prix, pre-dating Kobayashi's similar achievement by eight years – but it landed him in trouble rather more often. Kamui has combined the characteristic Japanese late-braking attack, with an awareness of the bigger picture. The only thing that he has not demonstrated beyond doubt is the last couple of tenths of searing speed; he has not quite made it impossible for the top teams to ignore him.

But there was once a man from Japan who surely could have been an F1 driver of the absolute front rank. He raced in only two grands prix, the first of them quite sensational, the second none too dusty. Over the next 20 years of front-line racing against some of the world's best up-and-coming talents he was consistently the man to beat: dear reader, I present Kazuyoshi Hoshino, Japan's Mario Andretti. He took his third and final Japanese F3000 title in 1993 at the age of 46 – beating a field that included Eddie Irvine, Marco Apicella, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, Roland Ratzenberger, Mika Salo, Jeff Krosnoff, Ross Cheever and Andrew Gilbert-Scott, a glittering array of some heavy-duty talent, all of it vastly younger.

His first grand prix was the '76 Hunt v Lauda title decider at Fuji where in a two-year-old Tyrrell 007 run by a few mechanics and a

tyre technician he suffered dramas in qualifying and started back in 21st. But with the old car refettled for race day and the conditions coming to his always-sparkling wet-weather skills he rose all the way up to third place. He was forced to call it a day when the team ran out of tyres!

Some said the Bridgestones he was running were better than the standard-issue Goodyears of the Europeans – and maybe they were. But that doesn't explain everything. His passing moves through the field on the superstars of the day, most of whom had never even heard of him, carried the smoothness and assurance of an old hand.

For the '77 race at the same venue he put the locally-built Kojima mid-grid (emulating the '76 achievement of another top Japanese driver, Masahiro Hasemi, who went on to set the race's fastest lap). But that was the last F1 saw of Hoshino. His career was associated with Nissan and he went as a paid professional to wherever they wanted him. When the world endurance championship visited Fuji in '85, he was there in a Nissan-powered March Group C car against the factory Porsches and his amazing speed in the inevitably wet conditions was a cornerstone of the car's win there.

Had Hoshino made the breakthrough to full-time F1 on the back of those two grands prix, F1 would have soared in Japan way earlier than it eventually did. Had he got into a quick car everything suggests he'd have won races – and the question would be: 'Could Kobayashi one day emulate the legendary Hoshino?'



Hoshino starred in his first GP aboard an old Tyrrell 007

“Hoshino's moves carried the smoothness of an old hand”

NASCAR

## MATT'S MACHINE

Former Roush Fenway driver Matt Kenseth had his first test with new squad Joe Gibbs Racing at Charlotte last week. The 2003 Cup champion will drive the #20 Toyota Camry next year. NASCAR season review, p108.



WTCC

# Renault cool on WTCC rumours

French manufacturer linked to World Touring Car entry with RML as new rules are enforced for 2014

Renault has played down speculation that it will enter the World Touring Car Championship in 2014.

Sources suggest that the French car giant could field its Fluence model, which has won races in this year's Argentinian Super TC2000 series, although the Megane has not been ruled out.

AUTOSPORT understands that RML, the team that ran the factory Chevrolet operation from 2005-12, is one of the companies in discussion with Renault. Team owner Ray Mallock would not comment about the speculation, but did say that the new-for-2014 WTCC rules would be a boost to the championship.

"I can see that it's a great opportunity to give added interest to the championship," said Mallock. "It's a fabulous series, and the

move to more-spectacular, faster cars is a move in the right direction in terms of getting more competitors involved."

Renault Sport Technologies technical chief Benoit Dupont said: "They are rumours and there is no comment from our side. Clearly we are looking everywhere, like we always do. Our man target remains the World Series by Renault, with a lot of new things including the Clio Cup next year."

Dupont added that dual WSR and WTCC programmes "would be difficult from the resources side".

But Renault has been part of the Technical Working Group into the new WTCC regulations, including meetings this month in Paris and Geneva. Japanese manufacturer Subaru is also understood to have been involved. The rules are believed to be almost finalised.



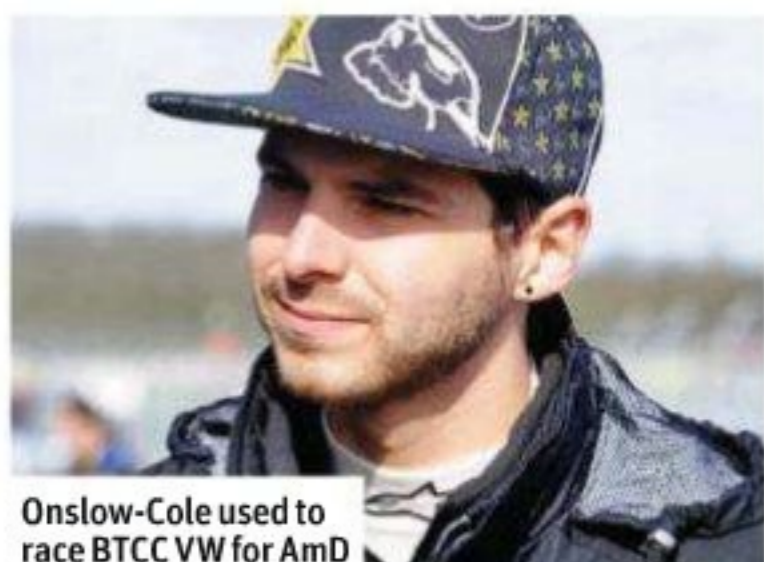
Fluence races in SuperTC2000

RML is still working on continuing in 2013 with its Chevrolet Cruze 1.6Ts on a privateer basis, and is understood to want to field Yvan Muller (who won the WTCC in RML Chevys in 2010 and '11) and new champion Rob Huff.

But Huff is pessimistic about

being able to go for a second title.

"WTCC is at the top priority-wise in that I'd love to go out and defend my title," said the Briton. "But it's probably the most difficult one to come off. I'm really struggling to see a way that I could get out there. I'm working flat out to get something sorted for 2013."



Onslow-Cole used to race BTCC VW for AmD

BTCC

## Onslow-Cole and Goff join Gilham's squad

### BRITISH TOURING CAR RACEWINNER

Tom Onslow-Cole has left WSR to drive one of Tony Gilham's new NGTC Volkswagen Passats in 2013.

Onslow-Cole, 25, finished sixth in the BTCC standings this year in a WSR-prepared

S2000 BMW, but believes that the front-wheel-drive Passat CC will be a competitive prospect in 2013.

He said: "I had a good year with WSR, but the ambitions of Tony's team and the commercial side made it hard to say no."

"The design of an NGTC isn't quite as complex as an S2000. It makes for more of a level playing field."

Jack Goff, the 2012 Renault Clio Cup champion, will also race for Gilham next year, driving an NGTC Vauxhall Insignia.



**BTCC**  
**WSR optimistic of 1-series speed**

**BRITISH TOURING CAR TEAM BOSS**

Dick Bennetts believes his WSR squad's switch to NGTC machinery will boost its chances of challenging for the championship.

WSR, which has run S2000 320si BMWs in the BTCC since '07, announced last week that it is building 1-series cars to NGTC regulations for 2013.

The cars will be based on the German manufacturer's 125i M Sport and will use the same Neil Brown-built two-litre turbos it ran this year.

Bennetts believes the move will enable WSR to take on the frontrunning works Honda and MG teams. "We have to learn the NGTC car, but our target is always the championship," he said.

"NGTCs have bigger brakes and bigger tyres so we'll now have that advantage. Hopefully the rear-wheel-drive will also give us an edge over most of the other NGTCs."

Bennetts confirmed the new 3-series had been considered, but

that he chose the 1-series for size reasons. "The old 3-series has done us well, but the new version is bigger," he said. "The 1-series is a smaller and lighter car. We felt it was more suitable to the current BTCC regulations and it should perform well on the tight and twisty circuits in the UK."

The driver line-up has yet to be confirmed but Bennetts hopes to retain Rob Collard and Nick Foster. He did admit that WSR would run "two or three" cars in 2013.

**AUTOSPORT SAYS...**

**JAMIE O'LEARY**  
REPORTS EDITOR

@mrjamieoleary



**I**'m of the generation that grew up watching the yellow and blue (and later green) Renault Lagunas ripping up the circuits of the UK in the hands of Alain Menu, Tim Harvey, Will Hoy and Jason Plato (no I haven't forgotten about Jean-Christophe Boullion, but he didn't exactly do much ripping up of tracks).

It's for that reason that I came over all nostalgic when I found out about the possibility of the Regie's possible return to touring cars recently.

Putting nostalgia aside, it would be fantastic to see Renault return to tin-top racing in a series with its base in Europe (race wins by its Fluences in Super TC2000 having garnered little coverage outside of Argentina other than this magazine's own

World of Sport section). The addition of Renault to a series that could potentially contain manufacturer entries from Honda, Lada, Citroen and Subaru by 2014 might just make the WTCC the series it looked like it might become when Chevrolet joined BMW, Alfa Romeo and SEAT back in its early days.

Even more importantly, it could pave the way for Rob Huff to remain in the WTCC on a long-term basis. The series needs its champions, and with Andy Priaulx long since having departed to the DTM via GT racing, Yvan Muller driveless for now and Gabriele Tarquini not getting any younger, retaining the Brit is of crucial importance to Marcello Lotti and his cohorts.

Menu won '97 BTCC in Laguna



**BRITISH F3**

**PlayStation racer linked to F3 switch**

**NISSAN GT ACADEMY STAR JANN** Mardenborough has been linked with a shock move to British Formula 3 after starring in tests with top team Carlin.

AUTOSPORT understands that the 21-year-old Welshman's initial tests were to get used to downforce before a projected move into LMP2 racing, but that an F3 switch is now possible. The British GT race winner has already signed up to contest next year's Toyota Racing Series in New Zealand (see p136).

Mardenborough is testing this week at Valencia with Carlin. It is his third run of

the month with the team, following tests at Oulton Park and Barcelona.

Team boss Trevor Carlin said: "We haven't had lots of comparisons as he's run in some dodgy conditions, but he's been incredible. It's quite staggering. "He would make a very good single-seater driver if they [Nissan] decide on that path."

● Meanwhile, Double R Racing has snapped up highly-rated Italian Antonio Giovinazzi, this year's Formula Pilota China champion, and Indonesian FPC race winner Sean Gelael for British F3.



Grosjean beat TK

**RACE OF CHAMPIONS**

**Big RoC win for Grosjean**

**ROMAIN GROSJEAN BECAME THE FOURTH** Frenchman to win the Race of Champions after triumphing inside Bangkok's Rajamangala Stadium last weekend.

The Lotus Formula 1 driver defeated eight-time Le Mans winner Tom Kristensen, beating the Dane in the final after head-to-head wins in RoC buggies and KTM X-Bow machines.

Grosjean had already beaten Sebastian Vettel and Michael Schumacher in the knockout stages while Kristensen defeated Sebastien Ogier and then David Coulthard.

Team Germany won a sixth straight Nations' Cup title 24 hours earlier as Schumacher and Vettel defeated Grosjean and Ogier 2-0 in the final.

**P51 2012's TOP 50 DRIVERS**



Mardenborough (l) was a British GT winner in 2012

**REMEMBER WHEN...**



**...a 1-series BMW last competed in the BTCC?** You could be forgiven for forgetting the tail-end AFM squad and its 120D of 2009. This is Nick Leason at the wheel, although Rick Kerry raced an earlier version in '07.

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INDYCAR

## DALY'S FOYT TEST

GP3 race winner Conor Daly, son of ex-CART racer Derek, made his IndyCar test debut at Sebring last week with AJ Foyt Racing. Indy Lights champ Tristan Vautier also drove, with Schmidt-Hamilton

US SPORTSCARS

# LMP2 v DP in US series

Baby prototypes won't be pegged back in US series in 2014. By GARY WATKINS

LMP2 cars will be allowed to race Daytona Prototypes for overall victory when US sportscar racing unifies in 2014.

Grand-Am boss Ed Bennett told AUTOSPORT that LMP2 will not be a secondary category when his championship and the American Le Mans Series combine. He expects P2 cars from the ALMS to be able to compete on equal terms with Grand-Am's DPs.

Asked if there will be P2 cars on the grid in 2014, Bennett said: "I think so and hope so. We'd like them to be on a par and think that is possible even though they are very different concepts."

The pronouncement ends speculation that Grand-Am, which is effectively taking over the ALMS, would insist on its DP category being the premier class upon the merger. It comes following a test of ALMS team Conquest Racing's Morgan-Nissan LMP2 2012 at the official Grand-Am session at Daytona last month.

The problem facing the rulemakers

for the new series, which includes key ALMS personnel, is that a high-downforce P2 car is significantly quicker at most tracks than a heavier DP, despite giving away more than 100bhp. This will inevitably result in an increase in performance for the DPs, said Bennett.

"The performance of the DPs has to go up," he explained. "We have to look at the aero – we could give them more downforce – and we think the power will increase. We are taking a hard look at the tyres that both types of car run on."

Bennett explained that this would likely form part of the strategy to curb the performance of the LMP2 machinery. He suggested that there would be aero revisions, but stated that there was unlikely to be a reduction of power for P2s because it would make overtaking GTE machinery problematic.

DPs and P2s could run in different specifications through the year, said Bennett, as Grand-Am attempts to match their performance



Conquest P2 car tested

at different racetracks.

Bill Riley, whose eponymous company dominates the DP market, warned that equalising the two types of car would not be easy.

"There will be some tracks where a P2 car will be quicker and vice versa," he said. "The cars will achieve their speed in different ways, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. It was the same with our Riley & Scott MkIII and the Ferrari 333SP in the 1990s, and it made for good racing."

➔ P111 SPORTSCAR REVIEWS

## IN BRIEF



Shedden and Neal stay put

### HONDA RETAINS BTCC PAIR

British Touring Car champion Gordon Shedden will, as expected, defend his title next year with Honda. His team-mate of the past three seasons, three-time champion Matt Neal, has also been retained by the Team Dynamics-run squad.

### GP2 & GP3 TO ABU DHABI

The GP2 Series will return to the Yas Marina circuit for its 2013 finale, when GP3 will make its debut at the Abu Dhabi venue. A standalone GP3 round has been scheduled for June 15-16 at an as-yet-unnamed European venue.

### ERICSSON JOINS DAMS

Champion GP2 team DAMS will run series veteran Marcus Ericsson and Stephane Richelmi in 2013. Swede Ericsson topped November's post-season test at Jerez for the French squad.

### M-SPORT'S BENTLEY DEAL

Bentley has signed up frontrunning World Rally team M-Sport as a technical partner in the design-and-build phase of its Continental GT3 racer. The car is scheduled to undertake a number of development races at the end of 2013.

### AF CORSE WINS GULF 12 HOURS

Ferrari squad AF Corse won the Gulf 12 Hours at Yas Marina for the second straight year last weekend. Gianmaria Bruni/Toni Vilander/Gaetano Ardagna Perez beat the sister 458 Italia of Ryan Dalziel/Alex Popow/Pierre Kaffer into second. Jumas Ali Al-Dhaeri/Alessandro Latif/Ivan Bellarosa won CN in fifth in their Avelon Wolf GB08.

### TINCKNELL EVALUATES OPTIONS

British F3 racer Harry Tincknell tested with Carlin at Oulton Park and Valencia recently while weighing up options for 2013. The team has also tested Jordan King and Canadian Nicholas Latifi, who have been linked to Double R and Fortec respectively.

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New i20 WRC was sampled in Germany

WRC

# Hyundai commmits to '14 return

Korean firm insists it is on schedule to make 2014 WRC return as i20 runs in Germany. By DAVID EVANS

**H**yundai has refuted speculation that it might not meet its target of starting the 2014 World Rally Championship with the all-new i20 WRC.

Since the Korean manufacturer announced its WRC return in October there has been no apparent forward move for what will be a European-based project, prompting some to question the validity of the programme.

Hyundai Motor Europe broke its silence on the issue at a test in Frankfurt last week.

One of the firm's two i20 WRC

show cars was present to offer journalists a ride in its first rally car since the Accent WRC of 2003.

Spokesman Stefan Henrich confirmed a building was being readied for Hyundai Motorsport, a new company that will run the project. He said Hyundai has made a five-year commitment to the FIA ensuring its presence on the 2014 Monte Carlo Rally.

"Hyundai is very different from other manufacturers," said Henrich. "Not better or worse, just different. The development speed at Hyundai is very good. In an established

company, you have the project and it needs a process, to build, to prove, to back-up, to get here... That's not out way. Our way is to say 'that's the job?' Then tomorrow morning we are done."

Henrich added that the development of the i20 would not stop once the 2014 competition began. Hyundai will only run its initial i20 for one year before it's replaced with a new car for 2015.

"In 2014, we have the final year in the lifecycle of the current i20," said Henrich. "In 2015 we come with the new i20. This is a new

model – not a facelift. So when we start competing with i20 in 2014, another team will begin working in parallel on the 2015 car, which will be based on new i20."

Henrich denied that the company had spoken to any drivers and said it would not do so for another six months. He confirmed, however, that Hyundai Motorsport's team principal will be revealed in January, with the technical director following – along with more development details – at the Geneva Motor Show in March.

ERC

## ERC wants a British rally

**EUROPEAN RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP BOSS**

Francois Ribeiro is working to ensure the return of a British event in 2014.

The Circuit of Ireland had been scheduled to run in the ERC next season after a successful IRC inclusion this year, but was forced out last week when crucial backing was lost for the Northern Ireland-based event.

"We want a British event in," said Ribeiro. "It is very, very important for



us to have one. We will talk to our friends in Ireland and to other events – including Scotland."

CoI director Bobby Willis said: "This has been such a tough decision to make, but one we had to take. The Circuit's finished for next year, but we'll be back bigger and better in 2014."

WRC

## M-Sport's 'exciting' trio

**MALCOLM WILSON HAS GONE FOR HIS** youngest WRC line-up to date for the M-Sport World Rally Team's first season as a privateer with Evgeny Novikov and Thierry Neuville joining Mads Ostberg.



Novikov will drive

The trio boasts only 108 WRC starts between them and have an average age of 23, but Wilson is convinced of his signings for his Qatar-backed 'A' team.

"We've got the three hottest properties in world rallying all in our cars for next year," said Wilson. "And I'm very, very excited. I think we can win rallies next season, but championship-wise we'll have to see how the year unfolds."

All three will contest a full season, with Ostberg the nominated scorer on every event. Novikov and Neuville will alternate the second 'official' seat, but all three Fords will have the same specification.

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Schumacher: fading  
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# SCHUMACHER v2.0

## The winning machine who craved a winning machine

So, the second career brought no titles, no wins. But how does the man himself explain his three years at Mercedes? *MARK HUGHES* attempts to pierce the steeliest of shells

**M**ichael Schumacher is sitting in the back of the car as the chauffeur guides us through the Abu Dhabi evening traffic. He's less than a metre away, but the inevitable shell is around him as we talk. It's the protective shell that all sportsmen have, especially with the press, but which in Michael's case has always been particularly difficult to penetrate. It's do-able, but only for a few seconds at a time when you press for a fuller answer than the polite-but-superficial one he will try on.

Is there not a frustration, I ask, about how circumstances have forced upon him the decision to stop at the end of what has been the most competitive of his three comeback seasons? When, from the comparison with team-mate Nico Rosberg or the great Monaco 'pole' lap, it would appear he would need only a competitive car to prove he could win again? "I guess I've proved it often enough," he smiles the dazzling white-toothed smile. Yes, 91 times, more than anyone else, etc, etc...

Obviously that's not a good enough answer, so you press for more: yes, but you came back to win and you haven't, yet your 2012 performances – more than in the previous two seasons – suggest you could now do it, given a quick car. "Yeah, that's true," he sighs in a tone more open and human, with the sheen dropped, the shield momentarily opening. "But that [competitive car] now looks too far away to maybe do it again.

"I've already done three years and in the talks I was having to continue it wasn't just for one more year – it was for more. And I struggled to convince myself to commit to that when that possibility looked so far away. That's why Lewis [Hamilton] is absolutely the right decision for the team. It was a long-term future and I'm not available anymore."

But then it's back to square one with the next question. Shield back up. Schumacher is extreme in this and it's about

way more than a distrust of British media that goes back to the days when he was fighting Damon Hill. Everyone who's worked closely with him will tell you that he's a fantastic guy – genuine, generous, sincere, loyal. But that's only for the inner core, those in the camp. For everyone else – and not just media, but everyone – there is next to nothing.

**Factoid:** in Schumacher's first F1 career he outqualified his team-mates 200 to 38 – or 84 per cent of the time. In his second career he outqualified his team-mate 16 times to 40 – or 29 per cent

That disconnect is there in his driving career too: has there ever been a more ruthless man wheel to wheel? Other drivers seem to find the balancing point of hard-but-fair quite natural, but for Schumacher it's always been about interpreting the wording of the rules to their extreme. Does that reflect a lack of intuition, that same inability to blend at the edges that we see in the contrast between his public and private personas, and therefore there has to be a pre-determined step-change? Or are both merely the choices of a hard-nosed professional?

We'll come back to Michael's thoughts on his comeback from the back of the limo in a moment. But for some insight into the character paradox a good source is Jock Clear, Michael's senior performance engineer since midway through 2011, and a man who as Jacques Villeneuve's race engineer was once on the other side of Schumacher the fearsome and ruthless competitor.

"I used to be one of those who saw him as arrogant and aloof," he admits, "and it's easy for the onlooker to get that impression. But in working alongside him what has struck me most is the incredible level of openness he has. He has achieved what he's achieved and there's no real reason for ▶

◀ him to open up the way he has unless he genuinely believes that's the way you go about doing the job. A lot of other drivers in that situation would have been a lot more difficult to get to know inside – and I feel he was able to do that within two or three races of us getting together.”

So what sort of guy does Clear see in Schumacher when he's opened up? “One of the things that's been a surprise to me is how vulnerable he can be. He may have the air of someone who has won seven world championships but you quickly recognise he has a lack of confidence in certain areas, just like anyone else. You're only as good as your last race and in China, for example, Michael wasn't thinking, 'I'm not bothered about being 0.5s off Nico in qualifying, I'm still a seven-time champion,' he was thinking, 'Blimey, maybe I've lost it. How can I be half a second off?' It isn't so surprising that such questions occurred to him, but what was surprising was how open he was about that self-doubt, how willing he was to ask for reassurance and a confidence boost.”

Incredibly open/incredibly closed, depending upon where you fit into Michael's world. But there is maybe a little space to be found in between, however briefly.

Back to the limo. We're a few questions in and he seems to be getting a feel for the tone of the interview and is beginning to thaw. So Michael, back in 2006 when you stopped the first time, you appeared still to be the quickest guy out there. This time around you've developed to the point where you look like all you need to win is a quick car, but even taking the car's competitiveness into account you don't appear to have found the extra edge that puts you absolutely at the top. Is that the time away, the control tyres, the lack of testing?

“Those things have added to the challenge and absolutely it made things more difficult,” he concedes. “You need to be in a rhythm where everything is natural. But that's not really been the biggest thing. We drivers in general terms, the very top bit that determines whether somebody is better or lesser is not because he drives better, it's how much he maximises the package, how much he can work with his engineer, with the team, to achieve absolutely the best combination; that's the big puzzle I always talk about.

“You need to put this together in the quickest way and at Ferrari that was very easy for me – I knew which drawer to open to achieve what was needed. But here it was all new and after being away for three years it took time to put together.

“It was a matter of luck more than feeling whether I was there or not. That's something I don't like - not understanding something”



Schuey was back to his best in Monaco



Unreliability struck, here in Australia



That's why very often I made a big step when my engineering team was changed – because the communication and speed of developing the car through the weekend was much improved.”

**Factoid:** where comparison was possible, Schumacher was outqualified by Nico Rosberg 74 per cent of the time in 2010, 86 per cent of the time in '11 but only 53 per cent of the time in '12

Here he's referring to a bit of an internal coup that happened just before Spa 2011, when Clear and race engineer Peter Bonnington took over from Mark Slade, Clear having previously worked as Rosberg's engineer on the other side of the Mercedes garage before briefly taking a factory-based role. Schumacher used the clout that comes with being the most successful F1 driver of all time to get what he deemed necessary, and Clear came to understand the differentiators – the things that had made the difference between a good F1 driver and Michael Schumacher.

“I've worked with plenty of good F1 drivers,” says Clear. “But having worked with Michael I have learned so much about how he was so successful. It is absolutely not about looking at the overlay and looking at where you get on the power or the set-up sheet and choosing the right rollbar. You just have to look at how he handles himself and how he interacts with people – that's the important bit; when he chooses to be tough and when he chooses not to when he could. When he came back into the pits from retiring in China with a loose wheel, I'm sure he really wanted to say,

‘Who the hell put that wheel on? Because that's just cost me a shot at winning the race and that would have set up my second career.’ But he didn't. Instead he comes back and is a really nice guy and tells the guys not to worry about it.

“When I was engineering Nico I was always monitoring when we were getting under Michael's skin, trying to figure out what we needed to do to make him think we'd got an advantage, to make him question whether he'd got the right set-up. But what I saw wasn't a concern about the next qualifying session; it was looking to find an advantage that would play out over the next four or five races. He realised long ago that all the time these other guys were agonising about a rollbar, just choose a rollbar and park that – now deal with some other things like bigging up the right people and getting them on side.”

So, was Schumacher in his comeback period using these superior inter-personal skills to compensate for a dimming of his former natural speed? The answer from the back of the limo? “There were moments when it was not clear to understand why in a qualifying lap I could not achieve the performance. But then in the race I could. Now I do understand why I couldn't. With the lack of knowledge that we had at those moments it was very difficult. It was a matter of luck more than a matter of feeling whether I was or was not there. That's something I don't like – not understanding something. Now with the information available it's a lot more precise.

“It's like when you say I'm still quick in the wet: it's not so much physical skills; it's the fact that it's a condition where it's difficult to understand where the limit is, and that's ▶



Spring in his step: Schuey remained motivated

◀ something I've never had a problem with. A lot of drivers are very quick when everything is easy to understand, but when it becomes difficult, that's where I show up."

OK, that answers part of the question, but watch Schumacher trackside and he's not driving in the way he used to – or in the way a Hamilton or Vettel does now. It used to be that he'd get the car to turn with only the minimum of steering movement, the car balanced in a beautifully shallow slide that got him the direction change early in the corner, pointed early at the apex, the car teetering on the edge of grip but Michael delicately sitting it there, with the absolute minimum of input. In his second career he was as late as ever on the brakes, took in a lot of entry speed, but was then wrestling with the consequences in a very physical way, as if no longer able to be just that tiny bit ahead of the car.

"What I think you're referring to is the difference between a well-balanced car and what we've had for the last three years," he says. "With a neutral car you can have it sliding from turn-in to exit and all the time you can just drive on the limit of the four wheels' given grip – and that's what I always want to achieve. People say I like oversteer but I don't. I can handle it and drive it but I don't want it. I want a perfect car – no understeer, no oversteer, all the time on the limit – and I had cars that did that. With a little input you could make it go the way you wanted it to go. I don't have that now and haven't had since I came here."

**Factoid: take car reliability out of the equation for everyone this year and Schumacher - assuming he would have scored third place in China - and Rosberg would have level-scored at 68 points each. Their actual scores were Rosberg 93, Schumacher 49**

But there were glimpses of how it used to be: "Yes, kind of. There have been moments, usually just for one lap. If a perfect lap is five, it's got to three sometimes, which is acceptable. But then with this car, as soon as you go for more laps, it's back to being an imbalanced car."

But for 1m 14.301s during Monaco qualifying this year

he peeled back the years to go fastest. Surely that makes for a golden memory? "No. It was beautiful at that moment. I was excited and happy. But if I look back to it now, was it a reason to be happy about the last three years? No. This was not enough compared to what I've been looking for." He's already gone on record as saying the target was absolutely to win races and another title, and there can be no doubt that the comeback has been a huge disappointment to him.

Clear believes that Schumacher – and not Rosberg – would have won in China had his man not retired with a loose wheel: "OK, Michael was second when he dropped out and Nico was pulling away from him, but that was on the same set of tyres that Nico had set the stunning qualifying lap and we on our side still like to believe that that was a bloody good set of tyres. There's nothing to persuade me that in the second two-thirds of that race Michael would not have hunted Nico down. So, 15 laps to go and Michael's closing you down and you're Nico Rosberg and you've never won a race before... Who's your money on?"

So he was as quick as he's ever been? "Probably not, no," says Clear. "But that has not been the crucial difference."

"I'll be brutally honest here. I don't think Michael is the quickest driver there has been for the last 20 years – because Mika Hakkinen on a good lap would be as quick and certainly Hamilton would be. But the whole game is about a lot more than a quick lap and Michael realised that a long time ago."

It used to be that Schumacher could test indefinitely to develop the car he needed and also to direct Bridgestone's tyre development in the direction that worked for him. Both these tools were taken from him in his second career. How significant was that to his performance.

"It's just something that is a given," says Schumacher, "so you have to adapt. My complaint about Pirelli was that as the control tyre it should be OK for everyone for the majority of the season, and I'm not sure that happened. It was a tyre that was too specific and that hasn't made things easier. The combination of our car and those tyres meant we sometimes fell totally out of the window. Five degrees of track temperature

**“I’m a racer. I push things to the absolute edge. People like it or don’t like it - I don’t care. What is allowed, I will go for”**

Valencia: the only podium of his time with Mercedes



Farewell outing came in Brazil

should not suddenly change the whole grid, but it often did.

“With regard to the testing, going back to the puzzle I was talking about, how quickly you can put it together determines the result, and racing and testing is what proves where the problems are and how you’re going to develop. Obviously with almost no testing it slows the development possibility and my input becomes less efficient.”

**Schumacher on his greatest rival:** “It was Mika Hakkinen because I was fighting him for the longest time and I have total respect for him on and off the track. A lot of drivers I raced with in the early part of my F1 career had too much polemic. I’m a racer. I push things to the absolute edge. People like it or don’t like it - I don’t care. What is allowed, I will go for. Mika never complained about that to the media. There was the time at Spa in 2000 that he took issue with me - but he complained only to me and said nothing to the press. I took his point, it was valid.”

But those three years have not been all negative. He came back as a lighter personality, less intense, the smile coming easier, the appreciation for what he was doing more obvious. “Yes, that’s true,” he accepts. “In F1 you get to meet very interesting people with lots of experiences in many different planes. This is something I was able in these last three years to appreciate a lot more, and to be able to be more open to explore and take in this experience. I have some very good, wise friends, some over 80 years old. I got to know them and it’s so fascinating to listen to what has happened to them and how they’ve lived their lives, what they did, what was the crucial moment, how to handle things.”

So what comes next? “For sure there’ll be a next. But whatever it is I don’t need to be thinking about it. There are going to be plenty of options. The important thing is to have that freedom to decide.” Decoupling a driver’s performance from his car is scientifically impossible. Even from the inside - with the telemetry traces ready to hand - we can see only orders of magnitude, not detail. The specific demands of a tyre, car

or circuit can swerve things towards one driver more than another; the quality of the people and the organisation around him obviously make an enormous difference.

Given an overall performance that was on a par with Rosberg’s this year - and which was frequently better - we can say with a certain degree of confidence that 2012 was his best personal performance of the three-year comeback and that such a level of performance would almost certainly mean him winning races in a competitive car. But, much as Michael might play down the importance of this, he wasn’t the driver he once was. Was this age? The damage from the motorcycle accident? Clear has an interesting theory.

“In general terms, what is required of these tyres does not suit Michael’s driving style as well as it suits some others,” he says. “Drivers like Michael, who turn the car using the rear tyres as opposed to the front, will suffer more from these tyres. The rears just can’t handle being stressed in that way. Which prompts the question of could Michael have adjusted his driving style? I’m not sure any of them can. I think drivers develop their skill and style around their predisposition to using certain cues and I think they are probably hard-wired in.

“Whatever yaw rate Michael needs to feel only comes from turning the car in on the rear tyres. This is the way all the really good kartists drive, but then you get to F1 with these tyres and it’s not the appropriate way. It doesn’t suit Michael, doesn’t suit Lewis Hamilton, but it does suit Nico, it probably suits Fernando Alonso, seems to suit Sergio Perez.”

Michael Schumacher will not be recalled in years to come for his three years at Mercedes. Instead, it will still be as the controversial colossus who redefined almost every aspect of the game. What the Merc years have given us are perhaps a little bit more insight into how he went about doing that redefining. The hard, impenetrable shell surrounds a sensitive, vulnerable guy, but one who can use even these qualities to enlist the devotion of those in a position to help him, like the winning machine that he is. That is every bit as calculated as the on-track attitude that takes the wording and pitilessly applies it.

It’s little wonder the career numbers stacked up as they did. ❧

“We did something not normal and it makes me proud”

Ferrari didn't have a title-winning car this year, but Fernando Alonso almost hauled the F2012 to the drivers' championship. *EDD STRAW* analyses the Spaniard's season



**F**ernando Alonso is not the fastest driver in Formula 1. Not that he's slow, but he's living proof that the idea of a great grand prix driver being nothing more than incredibly fast is reductive.

By common consensus, he was the outstanding driver of the 2012 Formula 1 season, taking a car that was, on average, fourth fastest on qualifying pace and third quickest on race pace, to within four points of the world championship. The lazy shorthand for this is 'outperforming the car' but it's a misleading statement. The laws of physics apply equally to all drivers and cars. But what Alonso did demonstrate was an uncanny knack for finishing a race in what was more often than not the best possible position.



Alonso: fast and focused

This was the foundation of his remarkable campaign. Granted, certain characteristics of the season played into his hands. Then again, it would be more accurate to say such features turned the cards he did hold into potential winners if played to perfection. By and large, this is what Alonso did.

“The highest point is to be sitting here with a car that we are constantly [qualifying] eighth with in the last races and we are *still* talking about the world championship fight,” said Alonso just under 24 hours before the Interlagos finale. “That’s something not normal. I’m very proud of the achievements we have had this year. If we had a normal season, we would have said bye-bye to the championship

around Singapore or Monza time and then have had a very relaxed end to the season. But because we did something not normal in the championship, we had the chance to win it in Brazil. That makes me feel proud.”

Unquestionably, the weakest suit of the Ferrari was qualifying. As Alonso was fond of saying, the Ferrari F2012 was two seconds off the pace in the opening pre-season test at Jerez and come the first race in Australia, he lapped 1.572s off Lewis Hamilton's pole position time. While the Ferrari did improve, Alonso's two pole positions both came in wet conditions, one at Silverstone and the other at Hockenheim. In dry conditions, it became abundantly clear that the Ferrari DRS was not allowing the

# ALONSO



Silverstone brought first of two wet-weather poles

rear airflow to re-attach quickly enough, leading to costly and never-resolved rear-end instability.

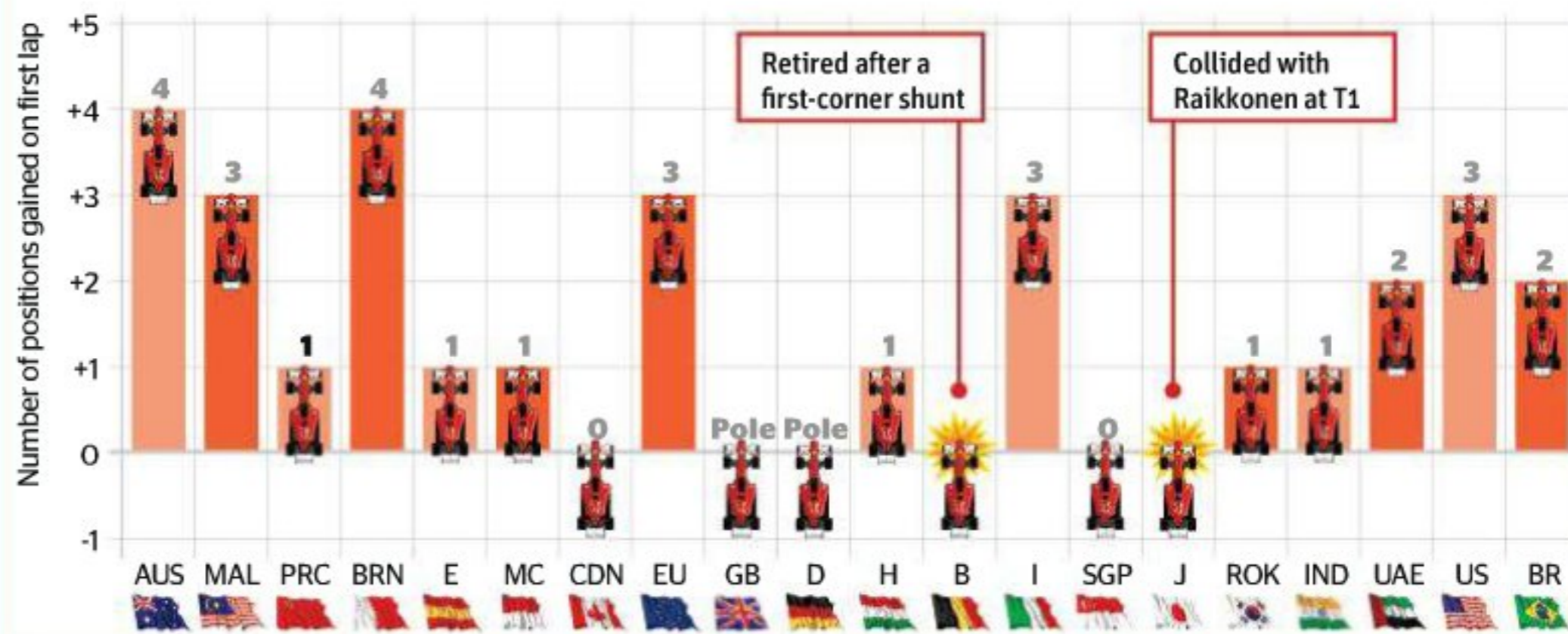
Yet Alonso had a weapon in his armoury to mitigate his disadvantage. As one senior member of the Ferrari hierarchy observed: "I do not think there is anyone better than Fernando in the first two miles of a grand prix".

On average, Alonso lined up in sixth position on the grid. Based on the 18 occasions on which he finished the first lap, he gained an average of 1.5 positions. Granted, the Ferrari was good off the line and team-mate Felipe Massa also found regular gains, but Alonso was a master of the first corner. And it had a transformative effect on his Sunday afternoons.

The other key strength that helped ►

## FERRARI'S FIRST-LAP OVERTAKING DEMON

Alonso might have struggled in dry qualifying for the majority of 2012, but he made up for it on the opening lap of races



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# MASSA'S RETURN TO FORM



Massa and old team-mate

Felipe Massa was finished as a grand prix driver halfway through the season. His results were dreadful and he headed into the August break with a pathetic 25 points compared with team-mate Fernando Alonso's haul of 164. There were no adequate excuses and the occasional flashes of pace that he showed appeared destined to remain brief, glimmering reminders of the title contender that he once was. In August, he was at rock bottom. Yet in the nine races that followed the break, he was the fourth-highest points scorer.

Massa admitted at the end of the season that the pressure of uncertainty over his Ferrari drive played a part in his struggles. It seems that hitting rock bottom gave him the freedom to ignore the pressure and start delivering the performance level expected of someone in the second Ferrari.

"August was good for me, just to think about things and say 'if I stay here, okay, if not, it doesn't matter, so I just need to drive the car and enjoy having fun'," said Massa. "That was very positive for me. I'm very happy now and very strong. Even in races [before the break] where I was quite strong and had good pace, always something negative happened that didn't put me in the condition to fight for the position that I was supposed to finish in."

Massa finished the season on a crest of a wave to the point where, at Austin and Interlagos, he outqualified Fernando Alonso. Despite taking a five-place grid penalty when Ferrari deliberately broke a gearbox seal in the US GP, Massa still had to be held back in the race to keep him behind his team-mate and in Brazil he let him past.

It was an astonishing turnaround for a driver who had looked a pale shadow of himself for the first half of the season.

POST-AUGUST BREAK POINTS		
POS	DRIVER (CAR)	POINTS
1	Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull)	159
2	Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)	114
3	Jenson Button (McLaren)	112
4	Felipe Massa (Ferrari)	97
5	Kimi Raikkonen (Lotus)	91
6	Lewis Hamilton (McLaren)	73
7	Mark Webber (Red Bull)	55

◀ to overcome the qualifying disadvantage of the Ferrari was Alonso's performance in the wet. The Ferrari's ability to warm its tyres, be they intermediates or full wets, and keep them in the operating window certainly helped on this score, but Alonso capitalised on such conditions ruthlessly. Granted, only twice were there genuinely wet qualifying sessions, at Silverstone and Hockenheim, but on both occasions he ended up on pole.

It's very easy to downplay the importance of qualifying, countering that the Ferrari's race pace was generally pretty good. But throughout the season, there was plenty of evidence in support of the fact that without a good starting slot, winning was a tough ask even with a quick car. In 16 out of 20 races, the winner started on the front row. Aside from the two wet qualifying sessions, Alonso only started so high up once, in Spain, where the Ferrari simply wasn't as strong as Pastor Maldonado's Williams in race trim. The Venezuelan was able to jump Alonso with ease in the pitstops.

It's equally telling that on two of the four occasions on which drivers started outside the front row, it was Alonso who came through. In Malaysia, he started eighth but won in a wet/dry race. In the European GP at Valencia, surely Alonso's standout race of 2012, he charged from 11th to victory – but only after Sebastian Vettel had suffered alternator failure.

You can make a compelling case that Alonso might have gone through the season winless. Had Malaysia been a dry race, there's no chance he would have won. As Sergio Perez proved, in dry conditions the Ferrari wasn't even the equal of a Sauber.

Likewise, had it been dry in qualifying at Hockenheim, Ferrari's DRS disadvantage would more than likely have left him at least behind

"If it had been dry in Malaysia it would have been different. The weather did help us"

## Ferrari's Pat Fry

the two McLarens. And at Valencia, there's no way he could have overhauled Vettel on track.

"Obviously, if it had been a completely dry race in Malaysia, it would have been a different story," said Ferrari technical director Pat Fry in Hungary. "I don't think we can hide behind the fact that the weather has helped us out. Do I think we're the quickest in a dry qualifying? I don't think we are now, but in the last two wet sessions [Silverstone and Hockenheim], it has been more impressive."

You could argue the toss over whether it was Alonso or the Ferrari that excelled in the wet, but the driver still had to deliver. It's impossible to underestimate how important these wet performances were for the Spaniard. In the four races in which qualifying or the race were decisively affected by wet weather (Malaysia, Britain, Germany and Brazil – 20 per cent of the season), he scored 31 per cent of his points.

What underpinned Alonso's title bid was consistency, a strength ▶

### POINTS IN THE FOUR RAIN-HIT WEEKENDS

POS	DRIVER (CAR)	POINTS
1	Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)	86
2	Mark Webber (Red Bull)	53
3	Jenson Button (McLaren)	44
4	Kimi Raikkonen (Lotus)	36
5	Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull)	33
6	Felipe Massa (Ferrari)	27
7	Sergio Perez (Sauber)	26
8	Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber)	22
9	Lewis Hamilton (McLaren)	19
10	Michael Schumacher (Mercedes)	27



◀ that was particularly crucial in the first part of the season when there was seven different winners in the first seven races. Appropriately enough, Alonso was the man who ended that run with his famous Valencia win, but it's no coincidence that it was during this phase of the season that he stretched out what seemed an unassailable points lead.

The Hungarian GP both summed up the nature of the start of the season and acted as a harbinger of doom for Alonso's title push. He finished fifth there, somehow extending his lead to 40 points. But the fact that McLaren, Lotus and Red Bull were all demonstrably faster than a Ferrari unassisted by bad weather indicated that his lead was far more fragile than it looked.

"The Lotus cars were quicker than us, the McLaren cars were quicker

#### POINTS AFTER HUNGARY

POS	DRIVER (CAR)	POINTS
1	Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)	164
2	Mark Webber (Red Bull)	124
3	Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull)	122
4	Lewis Hamilton (McLaren)	117
5	Kimi Raikkonen (Lotus)	116

than us, the Red Bull cars were quicker than us, so it was more than the maximum," said Alonso after the Hungarian race. "It's more than what the car is [capable of] at the moment. Our real position should be seventh, but thanks to the strategy of the team, we finished fifth. To increase the lead in the championship to 40 points is something we didn't expect."

There were two major factors that cost Alonso the championship from this position of strength. The first were his retirements from the Belgian and Japanese GPs, which added up to

a net points swing of 43 in Vettel's favour. At Spa, there was nothing that Alonso could have done as Romain Grosjean hurled his Lotus at the Spaniard after driving into Lewis Hamilton's McLaren. But Alonso was the architect of his own downfall at Suzuka, having moved over on Kimi Raikkonen on the run to the first corner, although Ferrari felt that because the tyre-cutting impact between the pair occurred as the Spaniard touched the brakes, Kimi could have done more to avoid it.

The second factor was Ferrari's development struggle. The Scuderia admitted the shortcomings of its windtunnel – shortcomings that are not expected to be resolved completely until around October next year. Alonso remained single-minded in his determination to extract the best possible result from

## HOW GOOD WAS THE FERRARI F2012?

Quantifying how good a car is in terms of anything other than results is tricky, but there is plenty of evidence to support the hypothesis that the Ferrari was no more than a solid car during 2012

### RAW PACE

On average, the Ferrari's raw pace was 100.742 per cent of the fastest over each race weekend, placing it behind McLaren, Red Bull and Lotus. Only once did a Ferrari set the outright fastest lap: at Silverstone where qualifying was wet and Red Bull would surely have outpaced it in the dry. You can make a case that Ferrari had potentially the fastest car twice. At Monza, Alonso might have been on pole but for a rear anti-roll bar problem, while Ferrari suspects that it might just have been able to nick pole in the dry at Hockenheim.

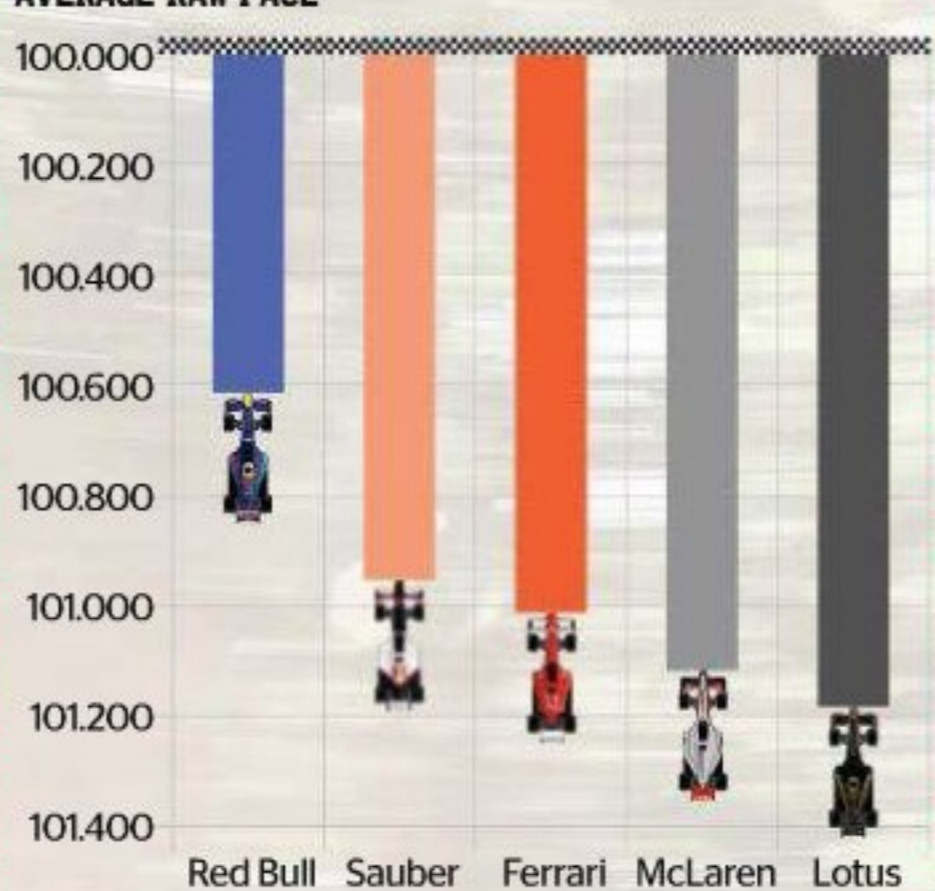
#### AVERAGE RAW PACE



### RACE PACE

Ferrari's race pace was unquestionably stronger relative to the rest than its raw pace. Based on figures generated using the fastest individual in-race lap for each race, Ferrari was the third quickest car overall.

#### AVERAGE RACE PACE



### RELIABILITY

Ferrari registered 37 finishes in 2012, but the three retirements, two for Alonso and one for Felipe Massa, were all the result of incidents.

#### MOST IN-RACE FAILURES

POS	CAR	FAILURES
1	Ferrari	0
2	Lotus	1
3	Red Bull	3
4	McLaren	4



Third at Monza despite issues in qualifying

“Maybe without the two Lotuses [at Spa & Suzuka] we would have been champion in Austin”

**Alonso reflects on collisions**

the machinery, but there was a growing frustration that Ferrari couldn't keep pace. In India, for example, Alonso privately admitted how difficult it was to drive what he considered perfectly and yet not be able to catch a Red Bull in which he could see the driver making mistakes.

He was locked in a battle against the law of averages as the Ferrari regressed to the mean in terms of points scoring. Had Red Bull not hit form, he could well have won that battle, but so strong was Vettel in the final seven races that Alonso could do nothing about it, even with the German being relegated to last on the grid in Abu Dhabi and being hobbled in the Brazilian GP. Ferrari still had reasonable race pace, but as Abu Dhabi proved, without a stronger qualifying performance, it was impossible to convert that into wins thanks to track-position disadvantage.

That 42-point loss tells you just how up against it Alonso was. You could argue that there was the odd extra point here and there that was achievable, but against the Vettel/Red Bull onslaught he was powerless.

**POINTS IN THE FINAL SEVEN RACES**

POS	DRIVER (CAR)	POINTS
1	Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull)	141
2	Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)	99
3	Jenson Button (McLaren)	87
4	Felipe Massa (Ferrari)	75
5	Kimi Raikkonen (Lotus)	66
6	Lewis Hamilton (McLaren)	48
7	Mark Webber (Red Bull)	47

In the final two races, Ferrari threw everything it had at Alonso's car and failed to make the expected steps. In the USA and Brazil, Alonso was actually the slower Ferrari driver, but whether that was down to Felipe Massa improving and Alonso 'tightening up' under pressure or the failure of upgrades is a moot point.

The points in the final seven races table is particularly telling. For while Alonso's and Ferrari's consistency and ability to extract the best out of a reasonable-but-not great package was enough to outscore the rest, he was nowhere near the hooked-up Vettel. Nor could he be.

But for all that, Alonso only ended the year three points behind Vettel. In Brazil, Alonso focused on the retirements in Belgium and Japan as the key to his title defeat.

“The low moments of the



Alonso's smile was broadest after Valencia

championship were Spa and Suzuka,” he said. “Without our fault, we lost and maybe without the two Lotuses we would have been mathematically champion in Austin.”

There's an element of truth to that, for even an eighth place in one of those races would have been enough to tip the balance in Alonso's favour. But the reality is that Alonso missed out on a third drivers' championship because the Ferrari wasn't quite good enough. He fought well, hung in there and through his

own all-round game he came close to pulling off a real upset. But even mid-season, it was clear he would be powerless in the face of an onslaught from a hooked-up McLaren or Red Bull driver. And so it proved.

Alonso didn't perform miracles in 2012. And he didn't defy physics. What he did do was piece together by far the most consistently strong campaign that stood out among all the teams and drivers. That's the mark of a great champion, even if he doesn't have the official title to prove it. ☼



# HOW PEREZ EARNED HIS MCLAREN MOVE

Initially touted as a future Ferrari star, Sergio Perez's 2012 performances instead earned him a McLaren drive. ADAM COOPER asks him how it all unfolded

Sergio Perez started this year as the man most likely to replace Felipe Massa at Ferrari in 2013, and ended it with a contract to take over from Lewis Hamilton at McLaren. The man himself admits that, had somebody told him how things would eventually turn out, he wouldn't have believed them.

"I would say that they were completely crazy!" he smiles. "At the beginning my target was probably to end up with Ferrari. It was quite clear that if I had a good year, good enough, I would be there. I had good options. But life changes, and moves you in other ways. I never expected that Lewis was going to leave McLaren, and I was going to get a chance at the best team in F1."

Perez was in the right place at the right time to land the McLaren job. Of course there's a commercial element to the equation, and no doubt we will see some Mexican branding on the McLarens in years to come. But the bottom line is that Perez enjoyed an extraordinary second season with Sauber, and by the halfway point he had become the man McLaren wanted.

So what did he do in 2012 to place himself ahead of other prime candidates including Paul di Resta and

Nico Hulkenberg? There were of course some brilliant highs, with his podiums in Malaysia, Canada and Italy, plus top-five starting positions in Spain, Belgium and Japan.

Having said that, he failed to make Q3 13 times, and on seven occasions finished a race outside the points. That reflects how hard it was for a midfield team such as Sauber to get everything right consistently.

"The thing I've seen this year is that the car was very 'peaky'. It's been very difficult to put everything in place, put everything together," he concedes.

"The circuits we struggled on were for example Canada in qualifying, or Valencia. We were trying different stuff on the brakes and I was locking very easily, and it was very difficult to understand the problem.

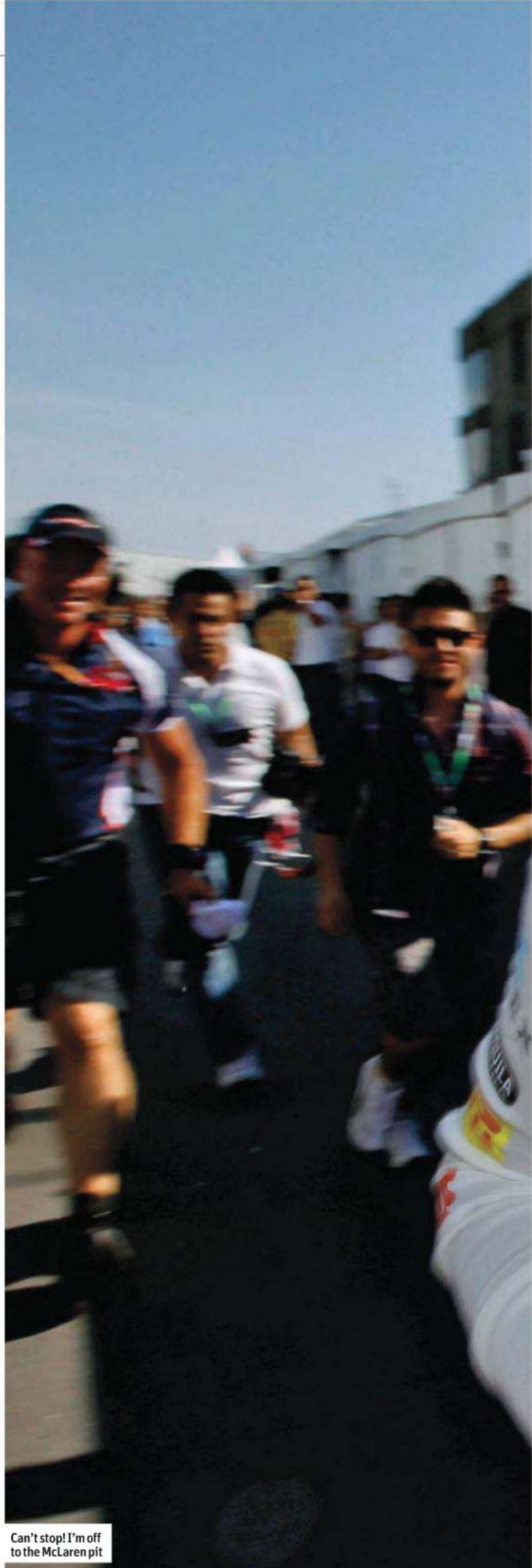
"So we changed to the standard brakes that we'd used the whole season, and then we started to really improve a lot. But then Hungary and Singapore were also really big struggles for us, and Italy, although in the race it was quite good. The circuits that were good for us were Spa and Suzuka, with the high-speed corners."

What Perez clearly demonstrated is his ability to race well and make the most of a good strategy, something that Sauber has so often been able to give both the Mexican and team-mate Kamui Kobayashi.

That was evident in the opening 2012 race in Australia, where a late stop helped him to climb from 22nd to second in the early part of the race, although the ultimate reward was a humble eighth.

A week later in Malaysia it was ▶

Perez had tested for Ferrari F1 team



Can't stop! I'm off to the McLaren pit

**INTERVIEW**  
**SERGIO PEREZ**



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**“In Hungary, Perez met Whitmarsh in a Budapest hotel. Discussions then took on a new momentum”**

◀ more about Sergio than the pitwall as he showed a delicate touch in the tricky wet conditions and gave himself the chance to hunt down leader Fernando Alonso. In the end it didn't quite work out, but he'd made his mark.

“There were a lot of things going on, and I was quite on the limit in very difficult conditions, with people talking to me,” he says. “We would never have expected to end up on the podium, and even for me to be able to fight for a win was a bit shocking! It was not what we expected, so we were on the nervous side, the whole team.

“When I look back I think it should have been a win, but the best thing is to have achieved my first podium in F1. It was a very special moment.”

The next three races brought no points, although he started a promising fifth in Spain. Then came Monaco, a race Perez missed in 2011 after his heavy qualifying crash. This time a Q1 mishap consigned him to the back of the grid.

“The biggest disappointment I had this year was definitely Monaco,” he admits. “It was very disappointing because I think I could have fought

for pole position there – I was really quick, and we had very strong pace.

“Then everything changed with the contact from Pastor [Maldonado]. When he hit me in FP3 we didn't manage to fix the front suspension for qualifying, so I went straight into the wall. I was very disappointed, but then we recovered and went to P11.”

He also set fastest lap, an achievement that McLaren boss Martin Whitmarsh later bracketed with the podium finishes as evidence of Perez's potential.

The curious thing about Monaco is that it didn't exactly fit the pattern of the other venues where the Sauber was genuinely fast in qualifying, such as Barcelona, Spa and Suzuka.

“Normally we would not expect to be as quick as we were there,” adds Perez. “We could have fought for a really good position, so it was a bit of a shame. But then we went to Montreal and we had a podium.”

On a circuit where, in 2011, he had completed just a few painful laps in free practice before handing his car to Pedro de la Rosa, Perez bounced back. Qualifying didn't go well, and he started only 15th, but in a race dominated by tyres the team got it just right and he charged up to third.

The next race, in Valencia, was key in the progress towards his new job. On a rare visit to the paddock former McLaren man Jo Ramirez introduced Perez's mentor (and latterly manager) Adrian Fernandez to Whitmarsh. The

pair had a casual chat, and Whitmarsh discovered that far from being tied to Ferrari, as was widely assumed, the Sauber star was a free agent...

That weekend Perez again started 15th after a troubled qualifying, and worked his way up to ninth.

Meanwhile, as the summer progressed, conversations with McLaren began to gather momentum. He was also being courted by Mercedes, and he still seemed to have a good chance with Ferrari, especially after Mark Webber removed himself from the equation by re-signing with Red Bull.

At Silverstone Perez was eliminated by a collision with Maldonado, before he enjoyed a solid sixth – two places behind Kobayashi – in Germany. Then in Hungary, the last race before the summer break, he met Whitmarsh in a Budapest hotel (see panel, p45). Discussions took on a new momentum, and they continued through August. McLaren still had no new deal with Hamilton, and the necessity to have an alternative ready became ever stronger.

When action resumed, Perez did his case no harm at all by qualifying fourth at Spa – albeit two places behind Kobayashi. Both men then had their races ruined by Romain Grosjean.

Meanwhile, Hamilton's possible departure to Mercedes made headlines in the days before the next race at Monza, where Perez put in another storming race to charge up to second behind Hamilton. On the way he ▶

Silverstone clash with nemesis Maldonado





Perez came close to a win in Malaysia...



Dude, that's my new car! Perez has moment battling Hamilton in Japan

◀ passed both Ferraris and, given that Prancing Horse president Luca di Montezemolo had that very weekend said that the Mexican wasn't ready for the big time, it was a sweet result: "It was very nice, especially in Italy! It was a special day for me."

But Perez plays down the significance of the timing, suggesting he had already made his mark.

"It's important to show well early in the season because the decisions are made during the summer," he points out. "By then I think the teams were quite convinced – not only McLaren, also I had other options. But for me it was important to keep showing that I could do a good job. And obviously it was a nice confirmation at Monza."

Meanwhile, in public Whitmarsh denied that there was a Plan B in place should Hamilton depart. But there was a twinkle in his eye when referring to Sergio – by his first name – after his stunning race performance. It was the first hint that the Sauber man might be in the frame. In fact, the deal by now was already in place, and it was a question of whether Hamilton really would vacate the seat.

"At Monza the talks were quite

## FERNANDEZ: MAKING THE McLAREN MOVE

The man who played the key role in getting Sergio Perez into McLaren is his manager, Adrian Fernandez, the former Champ Car racer who has long acted as a mentor to his young countryman.

Fernandez had little inside knowledge of F1, but drew on years of business experience gained from managing his own career and running his American Le Mans Series team. After being introduced to Martin Whitmarsh by Jo Ramirez in Valencia, he became the point man for all discussions with McLaren.

"It was a very open and clean negotiation right from the first conversation until the end," he says. "Martin was always very clear to us, and the same with us to him. 'Checo' had some ties to Ferrari, and there was also some interest from Mercedes. But our hope was always McLaren.

"I had to be ready, so that if something happened I had to have everything in place. Then they told us there was an opportunity, and they wanted to proceed. After it was done I had some tears in my eyes, because I knew how big and important this was. Then I called Sergio, and it was just overwhelming. But from emotions it turned to reality, as in now we have to do the job."

Results played a big part in McLaren's decision, but in the end the key was Perez's positive impact on Whitmarsh in Budapest.

"The turning point was meeting him out of the paddock, which is what I did in Hungary," the McLaren boss recalls.

"It was the first time that I'd met him on a one-to-one basis. I'd obviously been impressed by what I'd seen on the track. But he was clearly bright, a nice human being, and he was very ambitious, and that was very impressive too."



Fernandez: racer-turned-Perez manager



...and there was joy at Sauber over his podium

advanced," says Perez. "Martin is a gentleman, he was always straightforward to Adrian and me. Our relationship started very well and everything came into place.

"I had other options, but I wanted them to wait as long as possible, because McLaren was my first choice."

In Singapore Perez finished a modest 10th, and then a couple of days later his life was turned upside down when a holidaying Hamilton called Whitmarsh and told him he was indeed going to Mercedes. Within minutes Whitmarsh called Fernandez and told him the deal was on.

Perez insists that Ferrari had always remained a possibility. "Until I signed for McLaren I had options with them," he says. "I could have had a contract if not for next year, then 2014. They were interested, but my priority was to go to McLaren, always."

Remarkably, after he was confirmed at McLaren Perez failed to score a point in the last six races, a spell that included clumsy incidents with Hamilton at Suzuka and Grosjean in Abu Dhabi. So what went wrong?

"It's been a bit of everything," he shrugs. "Most of the time we were not

able to maximise our potential, that's clear. For example in India we did a mega qualifying – I think it was my best qualifying. I qualified eighth, when the car potential was really far from that. In the race things were looking fine and then I had a very big blister on the front left, and then I had to pit, so no points.

"In Japan I made a mistake, in Korea we had a problem with a pitstop, in Abu Dhabi I had contact with Grosjean, which I still think is not my fault – I don't know why I got the penalty there.

"Austin was looking really good. I had a mega first corner, and I was looking very strong, and then we had a very big problem with the brakes. We were so close to making the points or not making it, one detail like that ruins the weekend and then everything looks very bad."

The season ended with first-lap contact with a spinning Bruno Senna in Brazil. The drought certainly led to some criticism – had McLaren got the wrong man? But he had quietly outqualified Kobayashi in each of the last five races, transforming their intra-team battle and leaving it at 11-9 in Perez's favour.

### PEREZ CV HIGHLIGHTS

**F1 starts:** 37  
**F1 podiums:** 3  
**F1 fastest laps:** 1  
**F1 points:** 80  
2nd in GP2, 2010  
4th in British F3, 2008

He believes there were reasons why he often struggled on Saturdays earlier in the year: "Sometimes we had problems, some issues, like Australia and Monaco. And then we also had some other problems with the brakes at two or three races that we couldn't fix. Also we focused quite a lot on the race in some places, to try to maximise tyre strategy.

"In the position that we were in you have to think over the whole weekend, not only qualifying. If you're in a top team then the approach is totally different – you go for everything in qualifying. For us it was about making it [performance] last for the race."

Perez only turns 23 next month, and yet he arrives at McLaren as a veteran of nine years of car racing. And Sauber, the team that prepared Kimi Raikkonen for McLaren, could not have been a better school.

"F1 is not only about driving, it's not only about being quick, it's about being consistent, being intelligent, being capable of changing strategies, saving tyres, saving fuel sometimes," he says. "So in this respect experience helps, and I think I have learned a lot in these two years with Sauber." ❧



# Modern take on a Senna classic

It's official: there *is* an upside to waiting around for Romain Grosjean to get banned... Lotus reserve Jerome d'Ambrosio tells *GLENN FREEMAN* about driving the 98T from 1986

As soon as it is put to Jerome d'Ambrosio that the subject of this interview is the Lotus 98T he's been driving, a wide smile breaks. The Lotus Formula 1 test driver has been on duty for the team all weekend at the Paul Ricard World Series by Renault meeting, but his demanding itinerary was made worth it by the outings he had in the 1986 car, raced that season by Ayrton Senna and Johnny Dumfries.

After getting his first taste of the car on a sodden circuit (see panel, p78), the Belgian was let loose in dry conditions for a lengthy run a day later. While it was technically part of Renault's F1 demonstration programme, there was no slowing down to wave at fans and soak up the atmosphere. As the laps ticked by d'Ambrosio gradually turned up the wick, all the while tempering his desire to explore the limits with the fear of breaking such a precious car. He was horrified to hear that it had sprung an oil leak after his final run, which prevented Romain Grosjean from getting his own chance. But the Classic Team Lotus mechanics assured d'Ambrosio that it was merely the recurrence of a regular problem, so he was not to blame.

AUTOSPORT didn't even have to

ask him a question to get him started on what it was like to drive the car, so it only seems right to hand over to the man himself to tell the story...

**JEROME D'AMBROSIO:** First of all, it's an honour to be able to drive a car like this. It's something very special – this was built just after I was born! Plus, Ayrton Senna has driven it, and that makes it mean something more. We've all looked back at that era of Formula 1, and the guys who were racing then are legends. I've seen those cars on TV, but to get a feeling of it myself takes me back to watching when I was a kid.

It's unreal. Of course, as a racing driver you adapt to whatever you have to, but to bring these cars to the level they took them to, in all sorts of conditions, on tracks with the low levels of safety they had back then, it's crazy.

When I first got in the car, I looked down and saw my feet were way ahead of the front wheels, which is a strange feeling for a modern driver. The cockpit doesn't compare to the modern F1 car, where everything is perfect for you. And here, everything is still mechanical – you really feel everything you do. When you change gear you have a direct connection with the ▶

A classic in the wet: JDA gets first Ricard runoff



## TURBO POWER IN THE RAIN

Jerome d'Ambrosio's first laps in the Lotus 98T over the Paul Ricard World Series by Renault weekend took place in torrential rain.

With the spectators having long since run for cover, the Belgian could have been forgiven for deciding against taking a 1980s turbo monster out onto a track that was partially flooded. After all, it was supposed to be nothing more than a demo run, and there wasn't anyone left to demonstrate for!

But his mind was made up. And, as he splashed his way towards the first corner, images of the 1984 Monaco Grand Prix went through his head.

"Now I've driven this car in the wet I have

to think about if I would have liked to be in that race," he jokes. "As soon as I went out I was thinking about what Senna was doing with that Toleman in '84. I just thought, 'Wow, how did those guys do that?!'"

The flashbacks didn't last long though, as d'Ambrosio had his hands full just keeping the turbocharged 98T pointing the right way.

"Driving this car in those conditions really puts what those guys did into perspective," he adds. "It's crazy. The way you use the turbo in the wet, when you get the RPM right and the turbo kicks in it was actually difficult to use full throttle on the straights. There is just so much power."



Admiration for Senna and co in Monaco '84



"What do you mean, there's no KERS?"

◀ mechanicals of the car. You can feel the gear changing in your hand, and you know as soon as you have made a mistake or something goes wrong. It's very different.

With the gearshift today, you go up and down the gears and if there is the smallest feeling in the shift you come back to the pits and it's the first thing you tell the engineers. Then they plug the computer in, press a few buttons and whatever you felt is gone the next time. It's perfect.

With the old car, because you can feel everything I was being so careful. I didn't want to break anything. I was telling the mechanics how much I could feel through the gearbox and they were saying, 'Don't worry, that's normal'. I wanted them to tell me if I had damaged it in any way, but they said the oil leak is something they have had before and they were just being careful by not running it again.

There are far fewer things to deal with inside the car, but on the other hand you still have things to do, so you are busy. Downshifting with one of those cars is nothing like what we do now. Obviously we are busy in the cockpit in the modern cars, but it's a different kind of busy. And I can only imagine what a lap of Monaco must have been like in one of these! You have to take your hand off the wheel to change gear, and you're using three pedals. It's different – the tools at your disposal in particular – but the basics are still the same. It's still a Formula 1 car.

The teams have worked through the years and the cars have evolved with everything that has been learned in that time. Driving a car from 1986 didn't feel alien to me. Yes, it's a different generation, but I can believe that the 98T and this year's E20 are connected. It's not like you are doing something else; it's just different eras and different concepts. Today, aero is much more prominent, but you can feel the connection. Plus,

**"It's still braking, turning, accelerating, but this is very different. I was excited before, and still am talking about it now"**

with the gearbox, I started out racing in junior categories with H-pattern gearshifts so that's not something from another world.

When it comes to driving the car the main thing that struck me was the way to use the engine, and to make the most of the turbo. The power of the engine is amazing, and I know that what I had was not tuned to the levels of power they had back then. Still, what I experienced was pretty powerful.

And because of the way the turbo kicks in, the last thing you want to do in a corner is go in too deep. If you do that it costs you another 1000 revs, and then you're waiting forever for the turbo to come back, and you're lost on the corner exit. So you're in the middle of the corner, controlling the slide, letting the car drift, and all the time you are having to think about keeping the revs in the right range to make sure that the power is there for you as soon as you need it when you reach the exit. It's a big challenge.

Obviously, the cars were more unstable in the 1980s, but I can't really compare this one to the current generation of F1 cars. There is less grip, but it must have been so different back then with the car configured properly and the right tyres. I guess what I had was a bit different to what those guys felt driving these cars, but you get an idea. There is much more sliding around, and controlling the slide is very different compared to if you slide a modern car with all the downforce that it has. Sliding one of these cars is actually quite good fun. In the end you do build confidence,

particularly on the power, so by the end of my run I was just having fun with it. I wasn't just cruising around; I was enjoying it.

But you don't want to break a car like that, and that was the first thing in my mind when I got in. So yes, I was a bit cautious in places. Obviously under braking you don't want to take as much risk though. I was driving the 2010 Renault R30 on the Paul Ricard weekend as well, and I could jump straight in and immediately brake a lot later, and everything felt different. The 98T is less stable, and the braking power is not the same, and everything is moving around more. But it's still a good car, and the brakes are still good considering there are nearly 30 years separating the two cars. But I was really careful in not making mistakes because I didn't want to damage it! To get the chance to drive something like this is a privilege so you have to show some respect.

The main thing for me was that I had really good fun driving this car. I really enjoyed it; just being out on a track in that cockpit gave me so much pleasure.

Afterwards I really felt like I had done something special. Of course, it's still braking, turning, accelerating, but this is very different. I was excited before it, and to be honest I'm still excited just talking about it now.

This is nothing like what we do now, but I'm sure if I was born 30 years earlier I would have still wanted to be a racing driver. We all like the same things; the adrenalin that racing gives you, the challenge, the ambition, the power, the braking – we love it all. So whenever you go back to I'm sure this is what I would have wanted to do.

My favourite era of cars came just after this, probably around 1988-1991 – for me, those cars were beautiful. But it was great to be able to get the experience of driving a turbo Formula 1 car, which came just before that era. I'm really glad I did it, and I hope I get to do some more things like this.

Getting down to business in dry session



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**WHO'S THE BEST?**  
**TOP 50 DRIVERS**

# 2012 TOP 50 DRIVERS

So, here it is. After much debating, drafting and redrafting, the AUTOSPORT office has settled on its top 50 drivers of the year. As ever there's a mix of racers from different disciplines, from rallying to F1 via tin-tops and sportscars. See what you think...

## 50 CRAIG BREEN

### SWRC champion in Ford Fiesta S2000



Endured the most emotional season of his life, which involved losing his co-driver and friend Gareth Roberts in a shocking Targa Florio crash and then winning his second consecutive world rally title when he collected the SWRC award at the end of the season. Breen emerges from 2012 as a more mature and complete driver than ever before. He's been to hell and to heaven in a year he'll never forget. Deserves to progress further.

## 49 NICO ROSBERG

### 9th in F1 with Mercedes



On paper, this was the breakthrough year for Rosberg. He won the Chinese GP dominantly, kicking off a run of six races in which he was the second-highest points scorer in F1. But after scoring 75 points in his first eight races, he managed only eight in his last 12. It was also the season during which team-mate Schumacher gave him the toughest time. Being teamed with Lewis Hamilton in 2013 will be a stern test.

## 48 ADRIAN QUAIFE-HOBBS

### Auto GP champion with Super Nova



The dominant force in Auto GP, Quaife-Hobbs broke Romain Grosjean's series win record, scored victory by 30 seconds in Hungary and achieved a series first of a double victory at Algarve. The outstanding year was capped by receipt of the BRDC Fairfield Award. Impressed in post-season GP2 testing and is now fighting to raise a budget to compete in the grand prix support series in 2013.

- 1 Sebastian Vettel
- 2 Jenson Button
- 3 Fernando Alonso
- 4 Tony Stewart
- 5 Dario Franchitti
- 6 Will Power
- 7 Sebastien Loeb
- 8 Lewis Hamilton
- 9 Carl Edwards
- 10 Nico Rosberg
- 11 Martin Tomczyk
- 12 Sebastien Ogier
- 13 Jamie Whincup
- 14 Romain Grosjean
- 15 Andre Lotterer
- 16 Anthony Davidson
- 17 Jari-Matti Latvala
- 18 Mark Webber
- 19 Sebastien Bourdais
- 20 Mattias Ekstrom
- 21 Yvan Muller
- 22 Scott Dixon
- 23 Luca Filippi
- 24 Jean-Eric Vergne
- 25 Valtteri Bottas
- 26 Adrian Sutil
- 27 Paul di Resta
- 28 Lucas Luhr
- 29 Brad Keselowski
- 30 Sergio Perez
- 31 Robert Wickens
- 32 Felipe Nasr
- 33 Oriol Servia
- 34 Rob Huff
- 35 Roberto Merhi
- 36 Bruno Spengler
- 37 Kevin Harvick
- 38 Michael Schumacher
- 39 Heikki Kovalainen
- 40 Jason Plato
- 41 Matt Neal
- 42 Jimmie Johnson
- 43 James Calado
- 44 Kevin Magnussen
- 45 Craig Lowndes
- 46 Garth Tander
- 47 Andreas Mikkelsen
- 48 Mirko Bortolotti
- 49 Michael Krumm
- 50 Benoit Treluyer



Neal continued fight with arch-rival Plato

## 47 MATT NEAL

### DOWN 6

### 2nd in BTCC in Honda Civic



He might have lost his crown, but this was another fine campaign from Neal. He couldn't quite match Honda team-mate Gordon Shedden in the wet, but still scored five wins in a difficult season. The NGTC Civic was on minimum turbo boost for most of 2012 thanks to the BTCC's equalisation rules and Neal had to put up with the added problem of a hand injury from a road accident for the last three rounds.

## 46 JOHAN KRISTOFFERSSON

### NEW ENTRY

### Superstars champion in Audi RS5; STCC champion in Volkswagen Scirocco



The Swede won three titles in 2012, adding the Superstars crown to his Scandinavian Touring Car and Carrera Cup successes. Aided by lots of wet races that suited his four-wheel-drive Audi in Superstars, he held his nerve to collect points in an off-the-pace RS5 at the finale as rival Vitantonio Liuzzi was punted off. A necessary double win in the STCC finale at Solvalla was yet more proof that he can handle pressure.



Evans won out in tight GP3 title fight

## 45 MITCH EVANS

### NEW ENTRY

### GP3 champion with MW Arden

AUTOSPORT's GP3 season preview labelled Mark Webber protege Evans as 'GP3's target man'. The Kiwi teenager admitted on the eve of the campaign that he was ready for the challenge, and he said if he couldn't deliver then he obviously wasn't worthy of a place further up the motorsport ladder.

He delivered on the 'favourite' tag by winning the season opener, and over the course of the year he scored well enough in the races where he wasn't

blighted by misfortune to lead the standings for the bulk of the season.

The late-season form of new Red Bull recruit Antonio Felix da Costa and Daniel Abt gave him something to worry about, but he survived a fraught final weekend at Monza - where his only points came for taking pole position - to land the title. In a drama-filled season there was little doubt he was a deserving champion.



**44 OLIVER GAVIN**

**NEW ENTRY**

**ALMS GT champion with Chevrolet**



It seems like Gavin has been with Chevrolet forever and a fifth ALMS title in 2012 proves it. The Brit can now be called a veteran, but alongside new team-mate Tommy Milner he proved the speed, consistency and the fire in his belly are still there by returning to the top of the pile in arguably the most competitive GT field anywhere in the world.



**How does this American Le Mans Series title compare with the other four?**

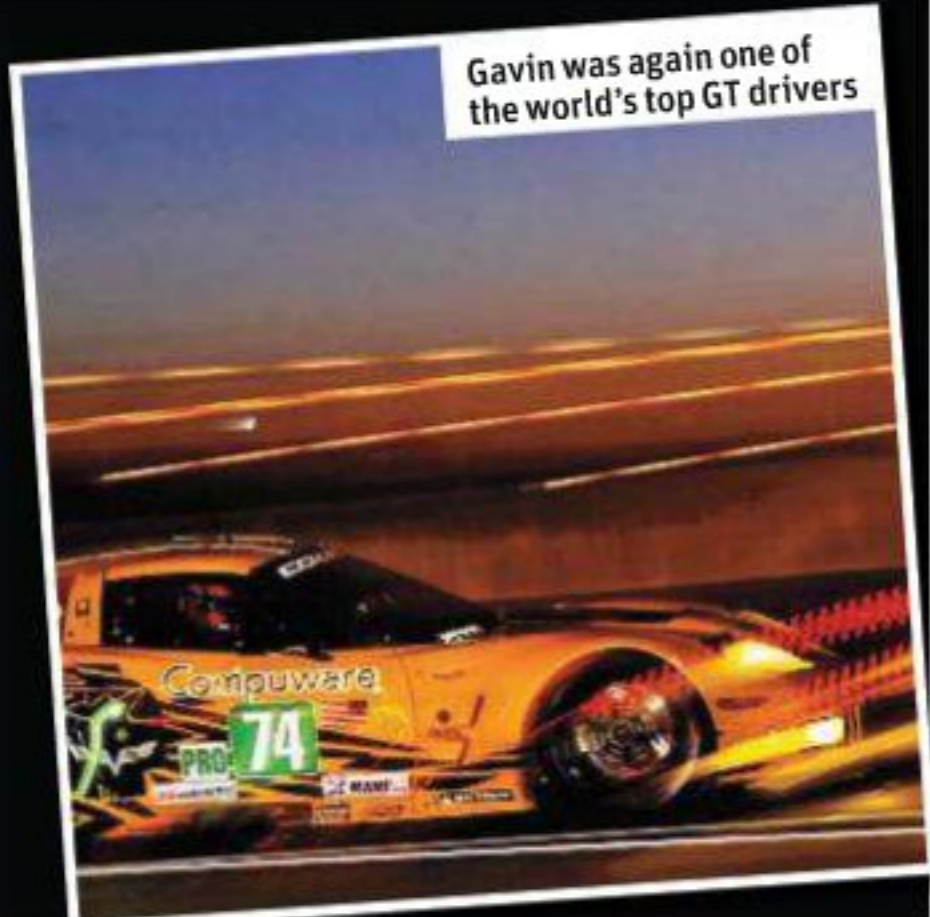
This is the one that has given me the most satisfaction. We had to beat BMW, Flying Lizard, Extreme Speed Motorsports and, of course, our team-mates Jan Magnussen and Antonio Garcia. That made it a very rewarding season.

**What changed between 2011 and 2012?**

Sometimes last year I thought that Jan and I were driving with one arm tied behind our backs. This year, the Balance of Performance was changed, which made it much more equal. The Ferrari 458 was still the class of the field, but there was little to choose between the BMW, the Porsche and us.

**Would you swap the title for another Le Mans victory after missing out in GTE Pro this year?**

I haven't won at Le Mans since 2006 and I'm keen to get another win. Luck plays a bigger part in the 24 Hours, whereas the championship offers a better reflection of how you performed over the full season.



Gavin was again one of the world's top GT drivers

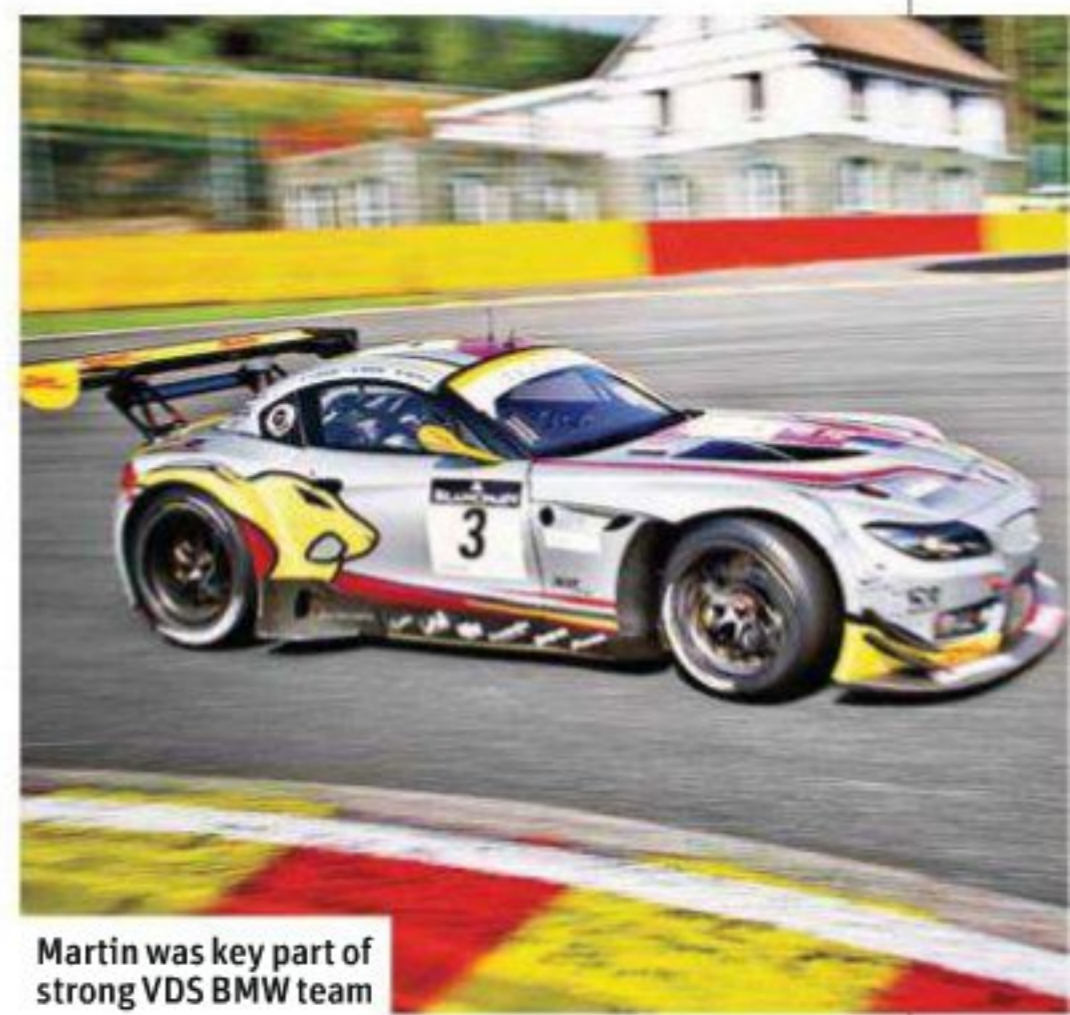
**43 MAXIME MARTIN**

**NEW ENTRY**

**Blancpain Endurance runner-up in BMW Z4 GT3**



Justice has been done: Martin is now a factory driver with BMW. Some amazing performances in the rain, most notably at the Spa 24 Hours aboard the lead Marc VDS BMW Z4, provided the sprinkling of stardust missing from the unassuming Belgian's reputation. Yet Martin is much more than a wet-weather specialist. He drove multiple cars in multiple classes in 2012 and led races in them all, including an LMP2 at the Le Mans 24 Hours.



Martin was key part of strong VDS BMW team

**42 MATHEO TUSCHER**

**NEW ENTRY**

**2nd in F2 in his second season of racing**



Fears that a 15-year-old with limited single-seater experience would be out of his depth in Formula 2 were instantly dispelled when he set pole position for his first race. It took a while for him to convert that pace into a win, but it was an eye-opening season by the Swiss, who seems destined to move on to greater things. Second in the points was no more than he deserved.



Young Tuscher was an F2 star

**41 NEEL JANI**

**Petit Le Mans winner; 4th in WEC in Rebellion Lola**



The Swiss enhanced his reputation as a top sportscar pro courtesy of a faultless season with Rebellion Racing. In 2012 he finally got a car worthy of his talents: the Anglo-Swiss squad stepped up its game and allowed Jani to achieve some tangible rewards – 'best of the rest' behind Audi at Le Mans, victory at Petit Le Mans and, very nearly, third place in the WEC.

**40 GIANMARIA BRUNI**

**RE-ENTRY FROM 2008 (49th)**

**GTE Le Mans winner; International GT Open champ in AF Corse Ferrari 458**



Bruni was, once again, the fastest man to get his hands on a Ferrari 458 Italia. The Italian proved he is the complete sportscar professional who always gets the most from his machinery and doesn't make mistakes. He was central to a successful season for the 'factory' AF Corse Ferrari squad, which won the GTE Pro title in the WEC, notched up another class success at Le Mans and won the GT Open crown.

**39 DANIEL JUNCADELLA**

**European F3; F3 Euro Series champion in Prema Dallara-Mercedes**



The latest member of Spain's largest extended-family racing dynasty (his uncles include Luis Perez-Sala, Jose Juncadella and Alex Soler-Roig) went into the Euro F3 season with seemingly little to gain. For his third year with Prema Powerteam he was clear favourite, but strong opposition from team-mate Raffaele Marciello, among others, meant he really had to work for it. After some errors, Juncadella had to dig deep.



## 38 JACK HARVEY

**British F3 champion in Carlin Dallara-VW**



This was the year he had to make it count in British Formula 3, and a phenomenal 10 pole positions from 20 showed Harvey and his Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen were the quickest combination. It was a close call for the title, but he kept focused and on it when it mattered.

### **Did you feel you needed a title to keep your Racing Steps support?**

Well, Oliver Turvey and James Calado finished second in British F3 so no doubt they wanted to win it! But they never put me under any extra pressure. Everyone worked together and their support was absolutely right.

### **So how proud were you to finally put the title to bed?**

Massively. F3 is a real stepping

Harvey got the job done in British F3



stone to F1 – look at the people who've won titles. To be one of the people on the list is incredible, and if we keep working hard hopefully I can follow that path.

### **Are you all set for GP3 with**

### **ART next year?**

Yes, but I just want to say thank you to Carlin, who were great, especially when times got tough. It's not just a team doing their job – I've got a really special bond with everyone there.

## 37 KAZUKI NAKAJIMA

**Formula Nippon champion in TOM'S Swift-Toyota; race win with Toyota in WEC**



It was obvious from his impact on the Japanese domestic scene in 2011 that the ex-F1 racer's return home had paid off, and things got even better this year. He snatched the Formula Nippon title for TOM'S at the Suzuka finale and added seventh spot in a hotly-contested Super GT campaign. Recruited to Toyota's new WEC programme, he took pole and victory on home soil at Fuji.

## 36 BENOIT TRELUYER

**▲ UP 14**

**Le Mans winner and WEC champion with Audi**



There was a time when Treluyer was mentioned as one half of an Audi double-act with Lotterer, but the rise and rise of his team-mate has left the Frenchman trailing in his wake – on the stopwatch, in the consistency stakes and, as you can see, on this list. The Frenchman ended the year as a world champion, but a couple of collisions could have sent the title in another direction.

## 35 JASON PLATO

**▲ UP 5**

**3rd in the BTCC in MG6**



It still seems quite amazing that Plato only has two BTCC titles to go with his 74 victories. This year a championship challenge was always going to be tough thanks to the late deal that brought Plato, Triple Eight and MG together.

Plato nevertheless scored a remarkable win on the first weekend of the season, but in the early stages the MG6 looked quite a handful. Some great drives and bad luck for Honda rivals

Matt Neal and Gordon Shedden kept Plato in the hunt, but rain at the Brands Hatch finale showed the MG was still a handful when things get slippery and he finished third in the standings.

Although there were a few scrapes Plato could – and perhaps should – have avoided, six wins and five poles were an impressive tally for a combination that will surely only be stronger in 2013.

Plato pressed on in new MG and took six wins



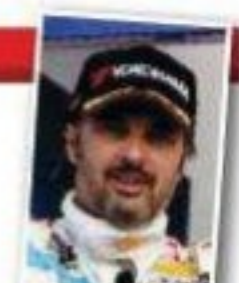
Muller had several scrapes but was rapid



## 34 YVAN MULLER

**▼ DOWN 13**

**3rd in WTCC with Chevrolet**



The triple WTCC champion remains in possession of stunning car control and frontrunning speed, as a record-breaking nine WTCC wins in a season testify. But the Alsace driver admitted making too many unforced errors in his latest title defence. Punting luckless factory Chevrolet team-mate Alain Menu out of the lead at Shanghai was a low point that severely damaged both men's outside title chances.

## 33 FREDERIC MAKOWIECKI

**NEW ENTRY**

**FIA World GT1 runner-up in Hexis McLaren MP4-12C**



'Mako' was the star turn in the FIA GT1 World Championship. The Frenchman shone aboard his Hexis McLaren MP4-12C and the word is that he's impressed F1 types in Woking who probably hadn't heard of him a year ago and certainly wouldn't have been able to pronounce his name. Perhaps even more impressive was his ability to match factory driver Bruni during a truncated season with the Luxury Ferrari squad.

## 32 JULES BIANCHI

**RE-ENTRY** FROM 2009 (26TH)

**2nd in FR3.5 with Tech 1 Racing**



The Ferrari junior driver moved on from two years of GP2 by switching to Formula Renault 3.5, alongside some F1 Friday outings for Force India. A controversial clash with eventual champion Robin Frijns effectively cost him the title in the season finale, but too many points had gone begging earlier in the season. It wasn't always his fault, but there were too many errors for a driver of his experience.



Bianchi threw away points early in year

## 30 PASTOR MALDONADO

**RE-ENTRY** FROM 2010 (30TH)

**15th in F1 in Williams-Renault**



The Venezuelan was the Jekyll-and-Hyde of the F1 season. Brilliantly quick in qualifying, making Q3 13 times, he also drove beautifully to win the Spanish Grand Prix and was never less than spectacular to watch. But there were also a lot of mistakes from the likeable Maldonado, who deserves credit for finishing the year on an even keel after the mid-season madness.

## 29 DAVIDE VALSECCHI

**NEW ENTRY**

**GP2 champion with DAMS**



This was the Italian's fifth season in GP2, and as he took over Romain Grosjean's 2011 championship-winning car at DAMS he had no excuses for not delivering. After blasting out of the blocks with three victories across the four Bahrain races, Valsecchi then had to battle back from a disastrous mid-season to retake the championship lead from fellow veteran Luiz Razia and go on to seal the title.

## 28 KAMUI KOBAYASHI

**RE-ENTRY** FROM 2010 (24TH)

**12th in F1 in Sauber-Ferrari**



While many at Sauber reckon his first year with the team in 2010 was his best, Kobayashi still compared well to McLaren-bound team-mate Sergio Perez this year. It was close in qualifying between them and, despite ending the year six points behind, the Japanese was a more consistent top-10 finisher. While Kobayashi's peaks were neither as regular nor as high of those of his team-mate, he was the more reliable Sauber driver and proved he still merits a place on the grid.

The highlight came on home soil at Suzuka. Kobayashi was under huge pressure from the home crowd and facing imminent unemployment, yet he qualified on the second row and held off Jenson Button to take a fine third place.

Kobayashi makes fewer mistakes than many credit him with and, were financial considerations not relevant, there's a good chance Sauber would have retained him.



Kobayashi had solid season for Sauber



Another Indy 500 fell to Franchitti

## 27 DARIO FRANCHITTI

**DOWN 22**

**Indy 500 winner; seventh in IndyCar in Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Honda**



A poor season by the four-time IndyCar champion's high standards. There was just one race win in the new Dallara DW12, but what a race to win: his third Indianapolis 500 victory was earned the hard way, after being punted into a spin in pitlane. A charging drive from stone last climaxed with him seeing off a final-lap challenge from Takuma Sato. It positions him in the upper strata of Indy legends.

## 31 GORDON SHEDDEN

**BTCC champion in Honda Civic**



The 33-year-old Scot overcame electrical gremlins, disqualification, low boost and fire - not to mention Matt Neal and Jason Plato - to score eight wins and take his first BTCC title this year. He was a popular champion too, as scooping National Driver of the Year at the AUTOSPORT Awards showed.



**Was 2012 your best year in racing?**

Yes, I think so. I really stepped up a notch and was more consistent. I learned a lot from last year and I won more races than ever before.

**What lessons did you take away from being so close to the crown in 2011?**

Maximising points in all situations. I got involved in the odd scrape in 2011, but I didn't hit people this year. If you're good enough to win, win; if you're good enough for seventh, finish seventh.

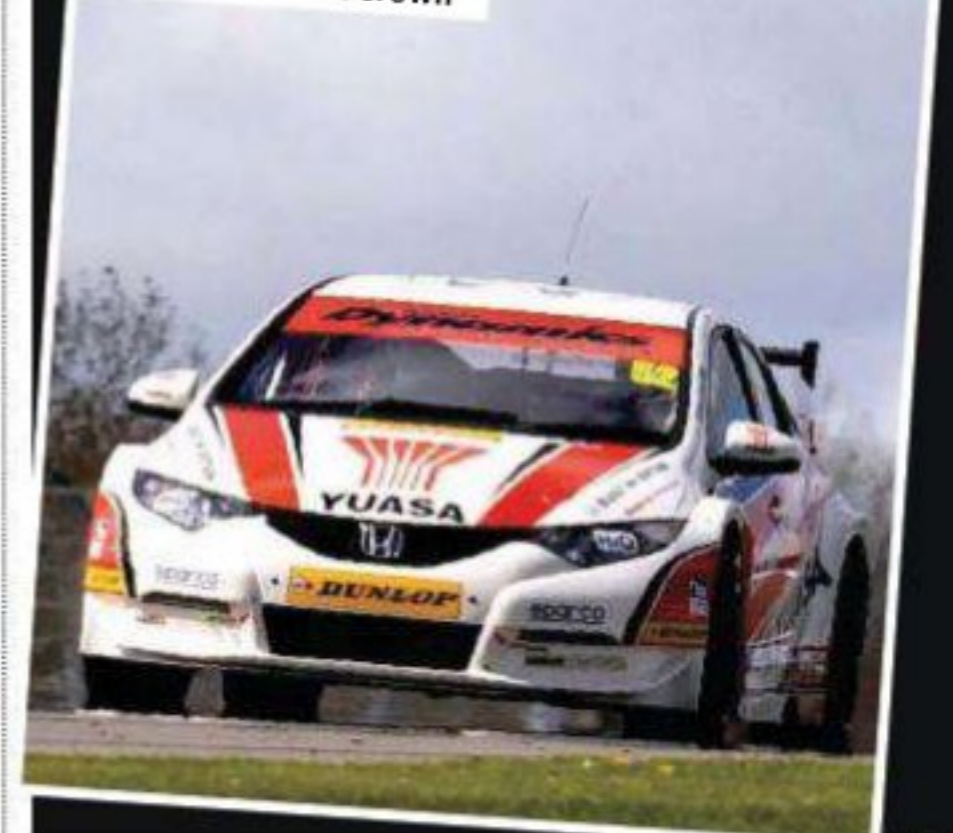
**What was your highlight of the year?**

When it all happened and I clinched the title in race two at Brands it was incredible. Racing-wise, as soon as it rained it all clicked for me. It felt like I had an edge and it rained more this year.

**When did you think you would win the title?**

Not at the Brands opener! It felt like I kept taking one step forward and two back. The goal was always there, but I knew it was going to be hard. It was all about getting to the last round in championship contention.

Shedden overcame a lot to take first BTCC crown

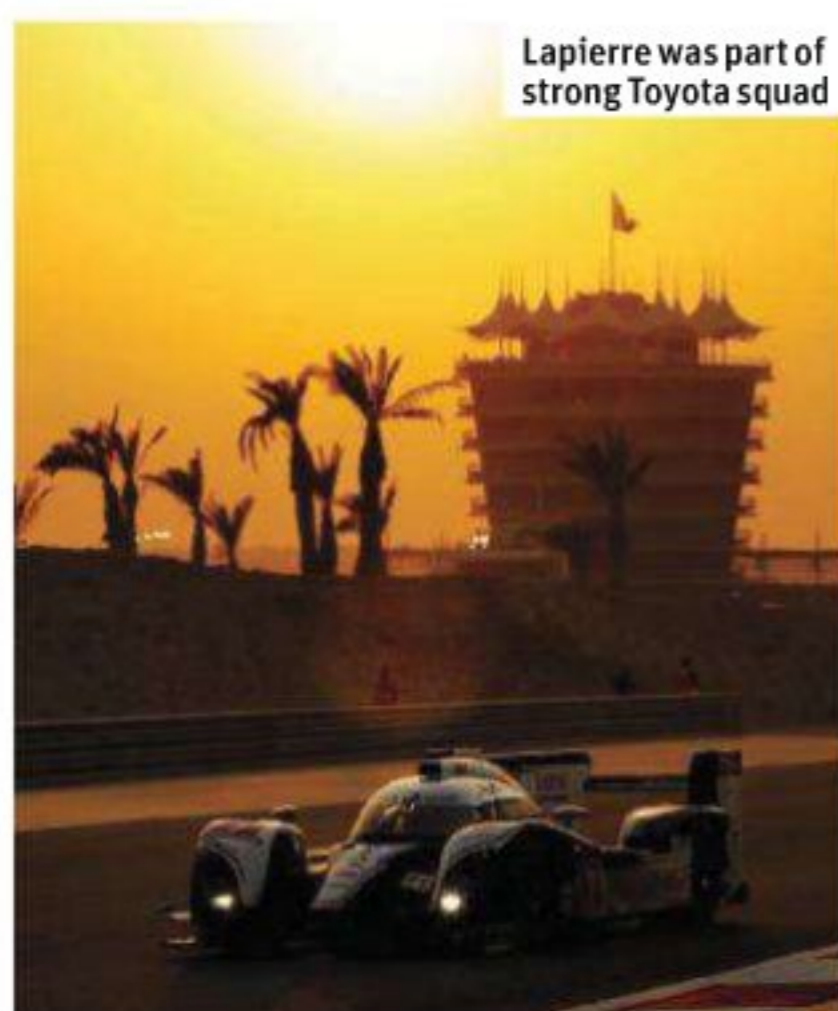


## 26 NICOLAS LAPIERRE

**3rd in WEC with Toyota**



This quietly-spoken Frenchman finally got the factory seat he deserved and proved that he is one of the world's top sportscar drivers. Just in case anyone was in doubt about this guy, he pulled off the move of the season – on the grass – to give Toyota an unexpected lead at Le Mans. If it hadn't been for a needless shunt lapping another P1 in Bahrain, we'd be talking about him in the same breath as Lotterer.



Lapierre was part of strong Toyota squad

## 24 SERGIO PEREZ

**10th in F1 in Sauber-Ferrari**



It's easy to run down Perez's three podium finishes, but only a simple mistake cost him victory in Malaysia and his charges in Canada and Italy with a tyre advantage were possible thanks to groundwork earlier in races. He wasn't consistent enough, there were mistakes and qualifying was a problem, but for a driver in only his second season in a midfield car it was a decent campaign.

## 25 MADS OSTBERG

**NEW ENTRY**

**4th in WRC in Ford Fiesta RS WRC**



Undoubtedly this season was the making of Ostberg. On numerous occasions in seasons past, the Norwegian has shown the pace needed to play with the big boys momentarily. This season he made it stick, winning a round of the World Rally Championship for the first time.

Granted, Ostberg's win came after Mikko Hirvonen's Citroen was excluded in Faro, but few will remember that as time passes. Equally as impressive as that Portuguese win this year was Ostberg's speed on the opening day in Spain. With

torrential rain hindering everybody's progress, he cracked on and led the event convincingly, despite running on the wrong tyres. That he battled with Jari-Matti Latvala for third place in the championship having contested two rallies fewer than the Finn was testament to Ostberg's consistency as well as his speed.

Ostberg's challenge now is to take both of those attributes and – as Qatar M-Sport team leader – win regularly and often in WRC 2013.



Ostberg's star rose in 2012

## 22 SCOTT DIXON

**NO CHANGE**

**3rd in IndyCar in Chip Ganassi Racing Dallara-Honda**

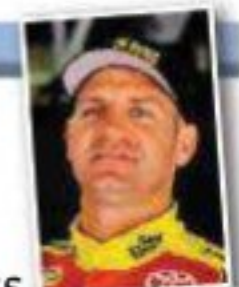


But for the timing of caution flags, or the screwy call from race control at Milwaukee, or any of the other random maladies that seem to afflict Scott Dixon's title chances every year, 2012 could have been the Kiwi's season. He occasionally qualified a row or two lower than you might have expected, but on race day he was a match for anyone.

## 21 CLINT BOWYER

**NEW ENTRY**

**2nd in NASCAR Sprint Cup in Michael Waltrip Toyota**



Dropped by Richard Childress Racing at the end of 2011, a move to Michael Waltrip's team didn't seem like a step forward for Bowyer. But in his best-ever season at Cup level he took three wins – at a road course, short oval and 1.5-mile 'cookie cutter' – and was a factor in the Chase until Jeff Gordon deliberately took him out of the penultimate encounter.

## 23 JAMES CALADO

**5th in GP2 with Lotus GP**



Fresh out of GP3, the Briton remained with the ART-run Lotus Grand Prix team for his graduation to GP2. Some incredibly bad luck prevented him winning any feature races, but two sprint victories went his way and he finished as top rookie.

### Did you think you had a title shot?

It was my first year with carbon brakes and a lot of power. I realised it would be difficult but I went into it full of confidence. It was only towards the end of the season I felt I got fully to grips with the car.

### You put in some great performances on street circuits...

In Monaco I did eight to 10 fastest



Bad luck hurt Calado in '12

laps in a row after my pitstop, and in Valencia the speed we had was incredible. To pull a gap of 17 seconds showed phenomenal potential and it was a shame about the badly timed safety car.

I was completely gutted.

### What about that fantastic Valencia sprint race?

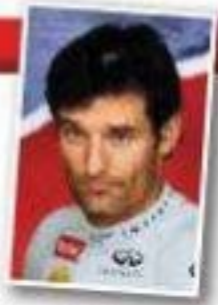
That was amazing. For the last five laps defence was key with my damaged car. I had zero rubber left and wheelspin in fourth and fifth gears. In all fairness Mr Razia did a very good job, but if I'd known he was there I'd have made his life much more difficult!



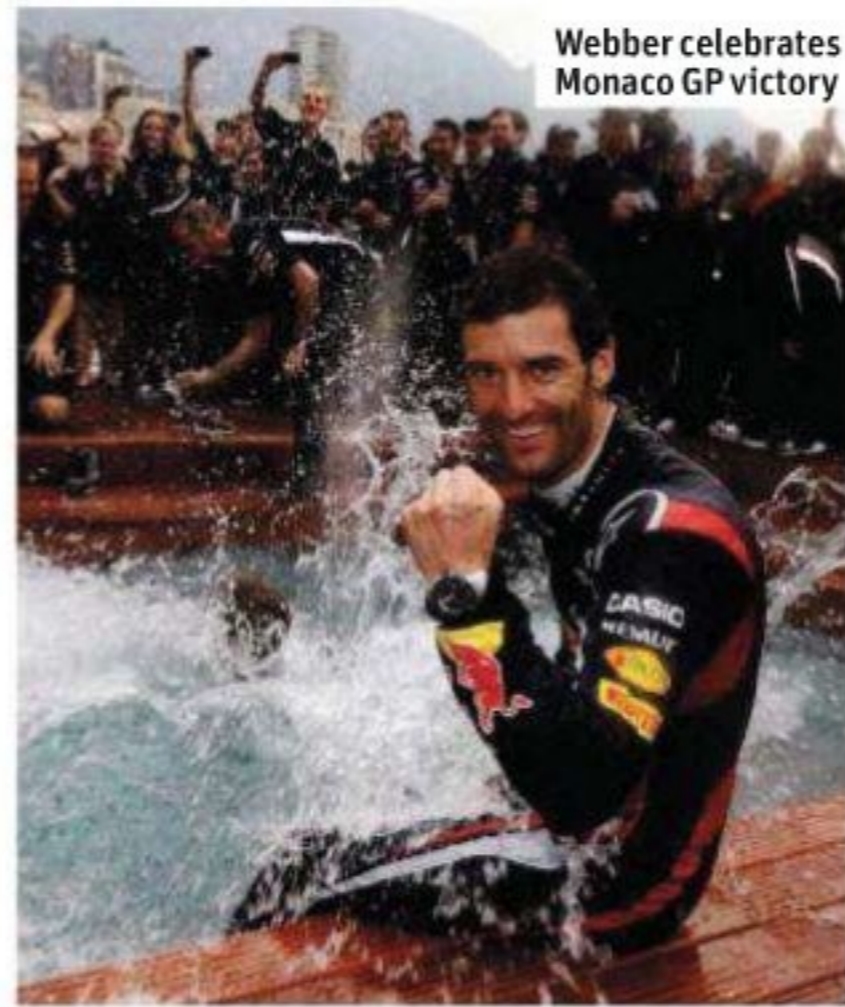
**20 MARK WEBBER**

**▼ DOWN 2**

**6th in F1  
in Red Bull-Renault**



In the second half of the year, Webber settled back into his traditional role as Red Bull's support act for Sebastian Vettel. But he had a far stronger first half of the year and often extracted more consistent performance out of the Red Bull than his team-mate did. The highlight was chasing down and passing Fernando Alonso to win at Silverstone, although his second Monaco Grand Prix victory under pressure also stood out.



Webber celebrates Monaco GP victory

**19 ALEX WURZ**

**3rd in WEC  
with Toyota**



He wasn't quite a match for team-mate Lapierre on race pace, but Wurz proved that he's still a sportscar top-liner. The Austrian played a key role in developing Toyota's TSO30 HYBRID, could lay it on the line in qualifying (witness his two poles) and didn't make mistakes. The Austrian has now won big sportscar races with three manufacturers and has time on his side as he searches for a third victory at Le Mans.

**18 ROB HUFF**

**▲ UP 16**

**WTCC champion  
with Chevrolet**



In the final season of Chevrolet factory involvement in the WTCC, Huff rewarded the faith placed in him by team chief Ray Mallock and former Chevrolet motorsport boss Eric Neve by lifting his maiden title.

Huff's Chevrolet team-mates Yvan Muller and Alain Menu remained in championship contention until the final race of the season, but the Brit's consistency was the key.

**Were there any lessons learned from the title near miss of 2011?**

I think I deserved to win the championship last year in terms of speed, but you could say the same about Yvan [Muller] this year. We learned from last year that regardless of where you are in the championship, you never give up. Possibly we won it this year on the basis of everyone else's mistakes, but at the same time you have to be in the right place at the right time.

**Did you take confidence that**

**towards the end of the season your gameplan appeared to be working, while Yvan was involved in some incidents, perhaps under pressure?**

I can't speak for Yvan, but he made a mistake in Slovakia when he hit Michalisz, exactly the same mistake at Sonoma and then he did it again at Shanghai. It's quite difficult to comment on, because the mistakes he made were minute in all three situations. Less than a tenth of a second would have dramatically changed all three of those outcomes. You're talking about,

at most, a metre of braking. When you're doing 140mph, it's almost impossible to judge those margins. So only very small mistakes, but all three counted massively to me winning the championship.

**What are your thoughts on some of those close calls in the Macau finale?**

Macau was of the most exciting races of the year, as people were crashing everywhere. It started off with Yvan putting MacDowall in the wall at Mandarin right in front of me, which was pretty hairy. I let natural instincts take over, as otherwise I would have got involved in that shunt. I kept my foot in - it was very much a subconscious decision! Looking back at it, I didn't think to myself, 'Oh God what do I do?', but looking back I went lift-flat-lift-flat-flat! If I had slowed down, the bit of debris that ended up in Tom Coronel's radiator would have ended up in my car.



Huff finally clinched first WTCC crown



**17 BRUNO SPENGLER**

**▲ UP 19**

**DTM champion  
with BMW**



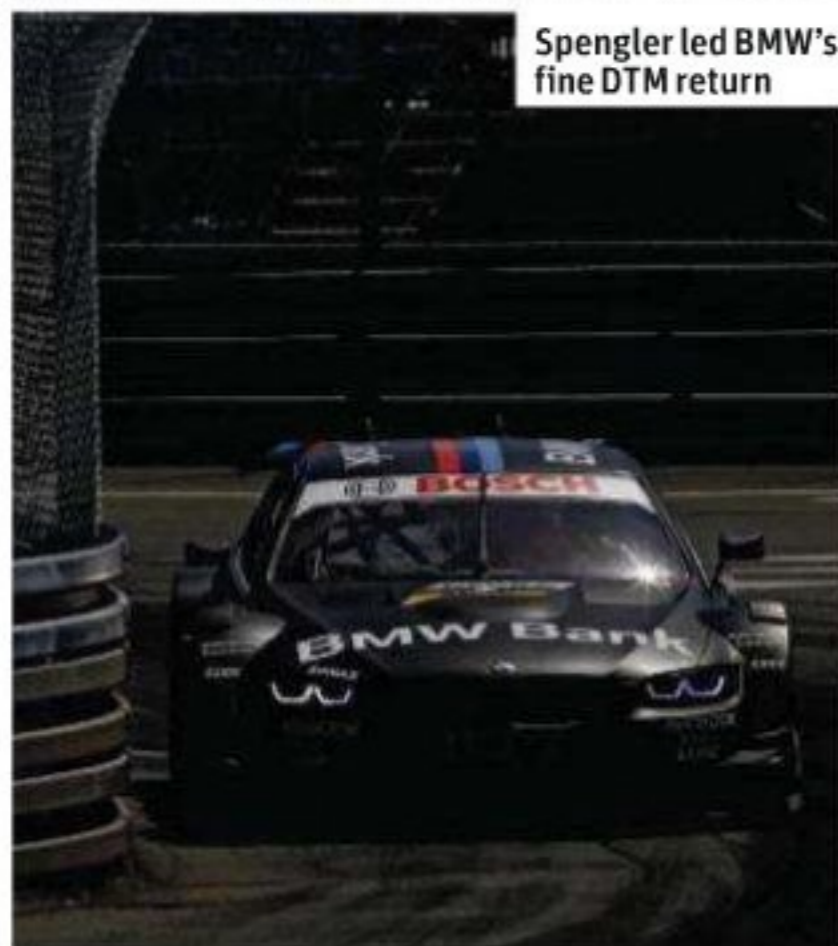
Took the brave decision to leave the security of Mercedes and lead BMW's return season to the DTM, and was rewarded with four wins. Beat title rival Paffett three-one in straight fights, but had more help than his Mercedes rival from his stablemates, who were able to influence his potential points tally more and more as the pace of the M3 improved towards the season's end. Spengler was key to that success.

**16 JAMIE WHINCUP**

**V8 Supercar champion  
in Triple Eight Holden**



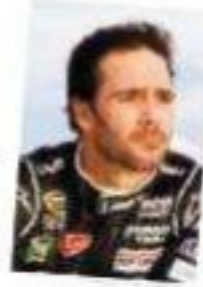
If you're looking for a way to top your fourth Bathurst 1000 win, following it up with a fourth series championship in the same year would seem a good way to do it. Triple Eight was the dominant team in the 2012 V8 Supercar field, but Whincup still had to see off iconic team-mate Craig Lowndes and the resurgent FPR pairing of Mark Winterbottom and former housemate Will Davison to secure the crown.



Spengler led BMW's fine DTM return

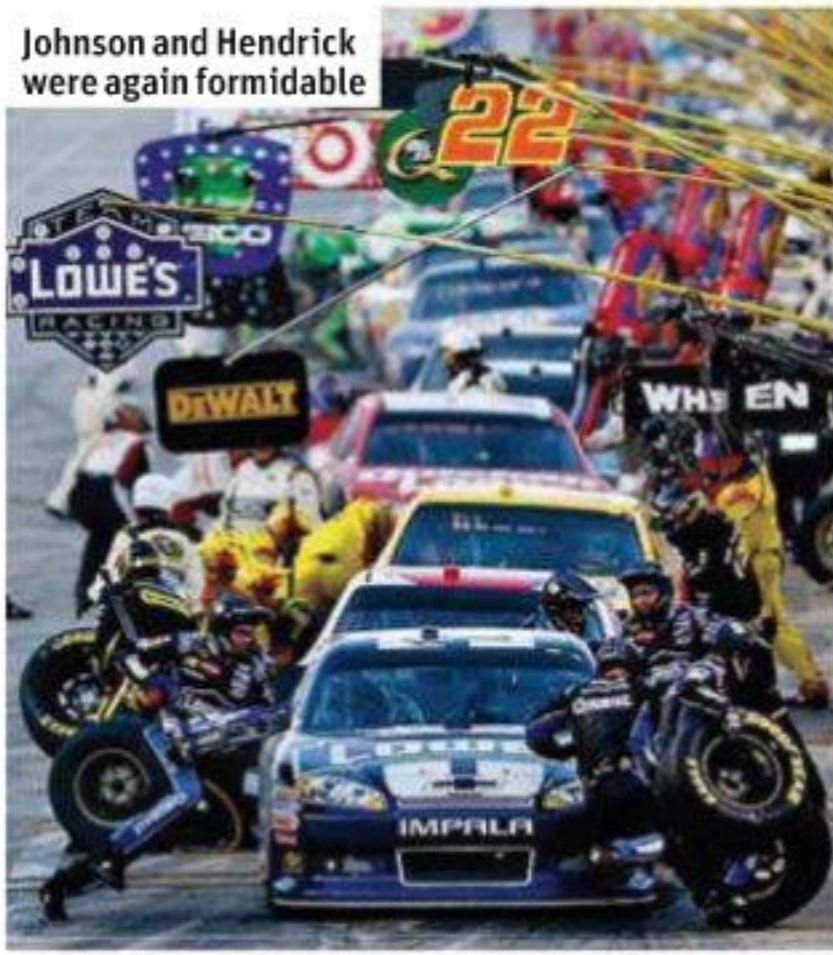
## 15 JIMMIE JOHNSON

**3rd in NASCAR Sprint Cup in Hendrick Motorsports Chevy**



The combination of Johnson and crew chief Chad Knaus remains the most formidable in NASCAR, but for once they dropped the ball in the Chase. An overheated tyre inevitably failed and put Johnson in the wall with one race to go, while in the Homestead finale a rare pitstop error all but ended his title hopes. Nevertheless, there were five excellent wins - including a back-to-back double in the Chase - that nearly delivered a sixth title.

Johnson and Hendrick were again formidable



## 14 GARY PAFFETT

**2nd in DTM with Mercedes**



The class of the field in the DTM - just - and was denied the title thanks to a combination of Mercedes dropping the ball on set-up at Nurburgring and Valencia and his C-coupe being spun by rivals at Norisring and Zandvoort. In spite of all this he missed out to Bruno Spengler's BMW by just three points in the standings.

Paffett led Mercedes' DTM title challenge



Hunter-Reay: first American IndyCar champ since 2006

## 13 RYAN HUNTER-REAY

**NEW ENTRY**

**IndyCar champion in Andretti Autosport Dallara-Chevrolet**



It might seem strange to have the IndyCar champion ranked below a guy he beat, but it's also important not to let the drama of the final races skew the earlier events.

On the whole, there were few races where Hunter-Reay was an out-and-out match for Will Power. But he was the only driver besides the Australian to claim a hat-trick of wins, and his resilience in the wake of the catastrophe at Sonoma, where he was punted out of third by Alex Tagliani, was extraordinary.

His performances under pressure in the final races were outstanding. Yes, you could argue that the restart that allowed him to take the lead from Ryan Briscoe at Baltimore was illegal (and many have), but the fact that Briscoe's push-to-pass was glitching out probably made it a moot point anyway. At Fontana, his car was miles off where he wanted it to be, but as the weekend - and the race itself - wore on, he found ways to make it faster. And it paid off in the biggest possible way.

## 12 NICO HULKENBERG

**RE-ENTRY FROM 2010 (12TH)**

**11th in F1 in Force India-Mercedes**



For two thirds of the season it was nip-and-tuck between Hulkenberg and Force India team-mate Paul di Resta. But thereafter the German side of the garage took the upper hand. Hulkenberg was formidable in qualifying and brilliant in the races, particularly in Brazil when he and Button extended a massive lead on slicks in the damp. Hitting Lewis Hamilton later while trying to take the lead was excusable.

## 11 ANDRE LOTTERER

**▲ UP 4**

**Le Mans winner and WEC champion with Audi**



Lotterer can now call himself a world champion and, after a second straight Le Mans victory, is on course to become a sportscar great mentioned in the same breath as Tom Kristensen and Allan McNish. The German anchored the line-up in the #1 Audi R18; he was quicker than his team-mates and made fewer mistakes. And just to prove his versatility, he won a couple of Formula Nippon races too.

Power won three  
races on the bounce

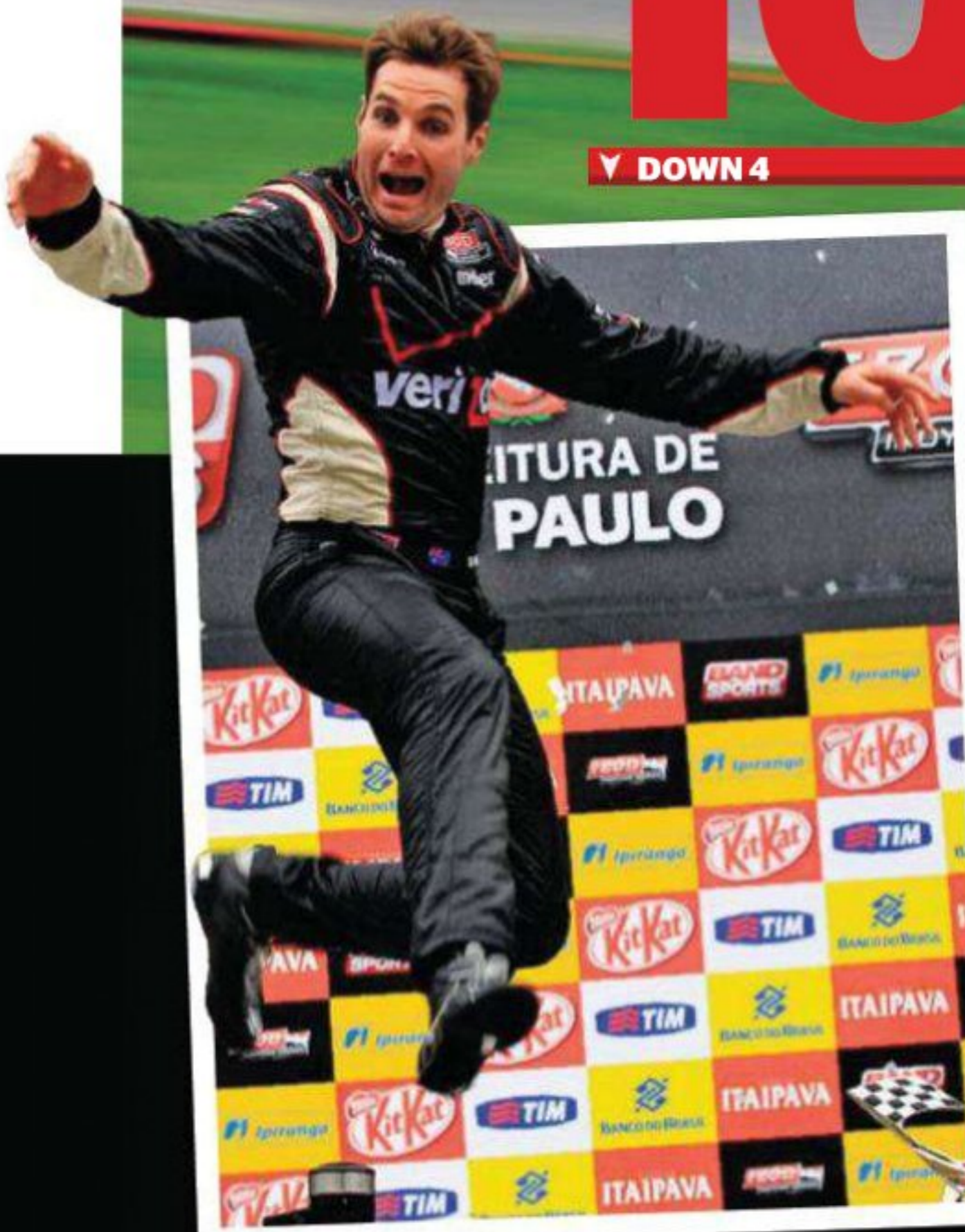


# 10 WILL POWER

▼ DOWN 4

2nd in IndyCar in Team Penske  
Dallara-Chevrolet

Q&A



**The final result wasn't what you wanted, but in terms of your general performances are you happy with 2012?**

As far as road courses go, once again we were really strong. It's just the ovals that hurt us. And it wasn't through lack of speed, or racecraft, or anything. It was just... man, it was something different at every track. So it was a good year. Obviously I was very disappointed to finish second again, but we're always up there.

**You say the ovals hurt you, but at the superspeedways your pace was generally good...**

Yeah. At the superspeedways we were fast. At Indy, Honda came out with something pretty good that we weren't ready for, and there's nothing you can do about that, but we qualified in the first couple of rows, and it was an accident that took us out there. Then there was the drive-through in Texas, where I believe we had the quickest car, and obviously I made the mistake at Fontana. So I look at it, and I think, 'Well, I don't really need to change all that much.'

**When the final margin is just three points, it's hard to pinpoint what you could have done differently - it's essentially one position on any given weekend, isn't it?**

It's nothing. When I look at the year, the average finishing position [for the champion] in 2010 and '11 was around sixth, and this year it was ninth. It was definitely more about consistency this season. At least the guy who won the most races won the championship - that hasn't happened for a couple of years.

**In Detroit, you said that you expected your biggest rival to be Scott Dixon. How surprised were you when it was Ryan Hunter-Reay who emerged as the main threat?**

They were always there. Obviously when he [Hunter-Reay] won three in a row it became apparent that he was a contender. Dixon was always there up until Sonoma. We kept an eye on him all year. Overall, to me, he was the strongest driver of the year, because he had more mechanical failures and other bloody things go wrong than anyone else. He was strong everywhere; he just had a bad year.

**The traditional question for someone who has finished runner-up is to ask what can be done differently next time around, but for you is it just a case of 'keep doing what you're doing'?**

There isn't much more we can do. We've just got to be there knocking on the door again. When you look at championships, the guy who wins often just has things fall his way. It's just 'your year'. I need to have one of those years.

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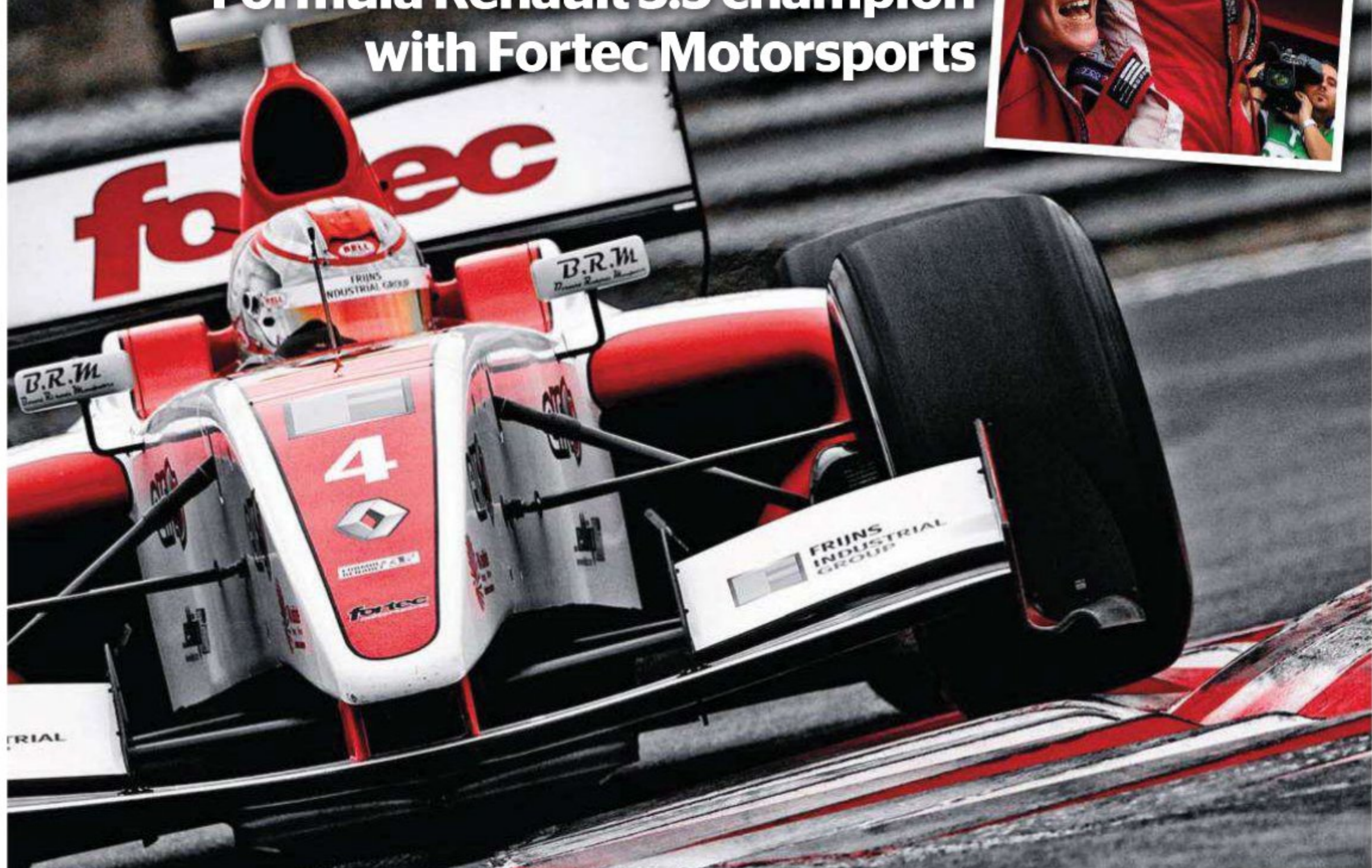
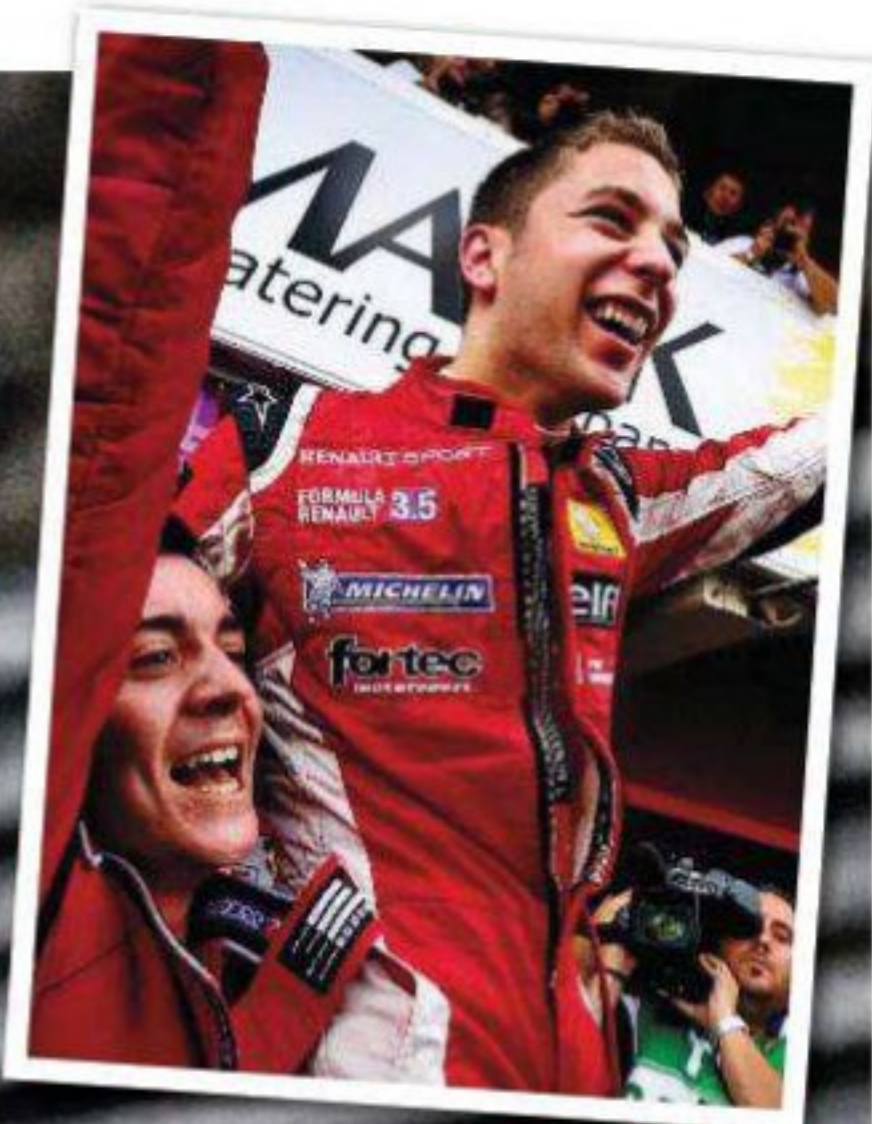
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# 9 ROBIN FRIJNS

NEW ENTRY

Formula Renault 3.5 champion  
with Fortec Motorsports



Frijns took title in his rookie season

Due to the improved performance of the upgraded Formula Renault 3.5 car for 2012, there was a concern that the step from the series' little brother (Formula Renault 2.0) would be too big. Then again, people said the same thing when Kimi Raikkonen went straight from FR2.0 to Formula 1. They were wrong then, and they were wrong this time as feisty Dutchman Robin Frijns stole the show to win the FR3.5 title at the first attempt.

The 2011 FR Eurocup champion turned a few heads as he regularly set the pace in FR3.5 pre-season testing, but his more experienced rivals shrugged it off. Frijns wasn't having as many reliability problems as many others were with the new

car, and as he was a rookie they assumed he and the Fortec team were focusing more on exploring the limits of the car rather than doing detailed work on race set-ups.

Then he dominated the second race of the season at Aragon, beating GP2 convert Sam Bird by 10 seconds to take the lead of the championship. He mixed speed and consistency with the ease of a veteran, and was never lower than

second in the title race. Frijns is supremely confident, but his achievements surpassed even his own expectations.

"We never expected it," he says. "Before the season I was thinking I would just be happy to make the top five. But we kept winning, and if you are in a position to fight for a championship you have to go for it."

This was one of the strongest fields to grace the headline championship on the World Series

by Renault bill, which made the story of a rookie winning the title even more remarkable. But Frijns says he was happy just to step into such a competitive grid.

"I love competition, and I'm not going to drive in a championship where the level is low," he adds. "I need to develop myself, and if I'm winning every race I'm not learning and not enjoying myself."

Winning the championship was a phenomenal performance for a rookie. Unfortunately, in the eyes of some his 2012 crown - his third junior title in as many years - will always be tarnished by his controversial clash with Jules Bianchi that ended up sealing the crown in his favour.

Young racer was quick out of blocks





# 8 ANTONIO FELIX DA COSTA

NEW ENTRY

## Race winner in FR3.5 with Arden; GP3 & F3 with Carlin

Forget where he finished in the championships: four wins in Formula Renault 3.5, three in GP3 and victory in the season-ending Macau F3 Grand Prix (as well as two MSV F3 club races!) proved this Red Bull Junior has speed, versatility and intelligence. He also impressed in his F1 Young Driver test in Abu Dhabi with Red Bull Racing.



Carlin: likes 'raggers'

### TREVOR CARLIN Carlin team principal

"I'd say he's as good as Sebastian Vettel was at that stage in his career for sure. The main thing is his attitude; he's just a great bloke to work with. Earlier in the season we had some trouble with the GP3 car, but he was always positive and that really motivates the team. All the other drivers like him too, and that's rare. He's also a fantastic racer - if anything he might be a little bit better than Seb in that regard. The way he was able to jump from car to car was impressive, but I'm old school; I think all drivers should be able to do that - Jim Clark could get in an F1 or an F2 car or a touring car and just rag it."

### TIAGO MONTEIRO Manager & ex-F1 racer

"What happened in the second half of this year was not really a surprise to me, because I knew he was a guy with an amazing talent. It all came together, by coincidence, when he was signed up by Red Bull. His tough experiences have made him a better driver mentally and physically. I had no doubt that he was F1 standard before, and now I think he is ready. I'm not against him doing another year before F1, but if the opportunity is there in 2013, I'd say he is as prepared, or better prepared, than several recent rookies. He's a very clever boy; it's not a question of can he make it or not - I'm now more than ever sure that he can."



AFDC with Monteiro



Arden chief Rouse on left

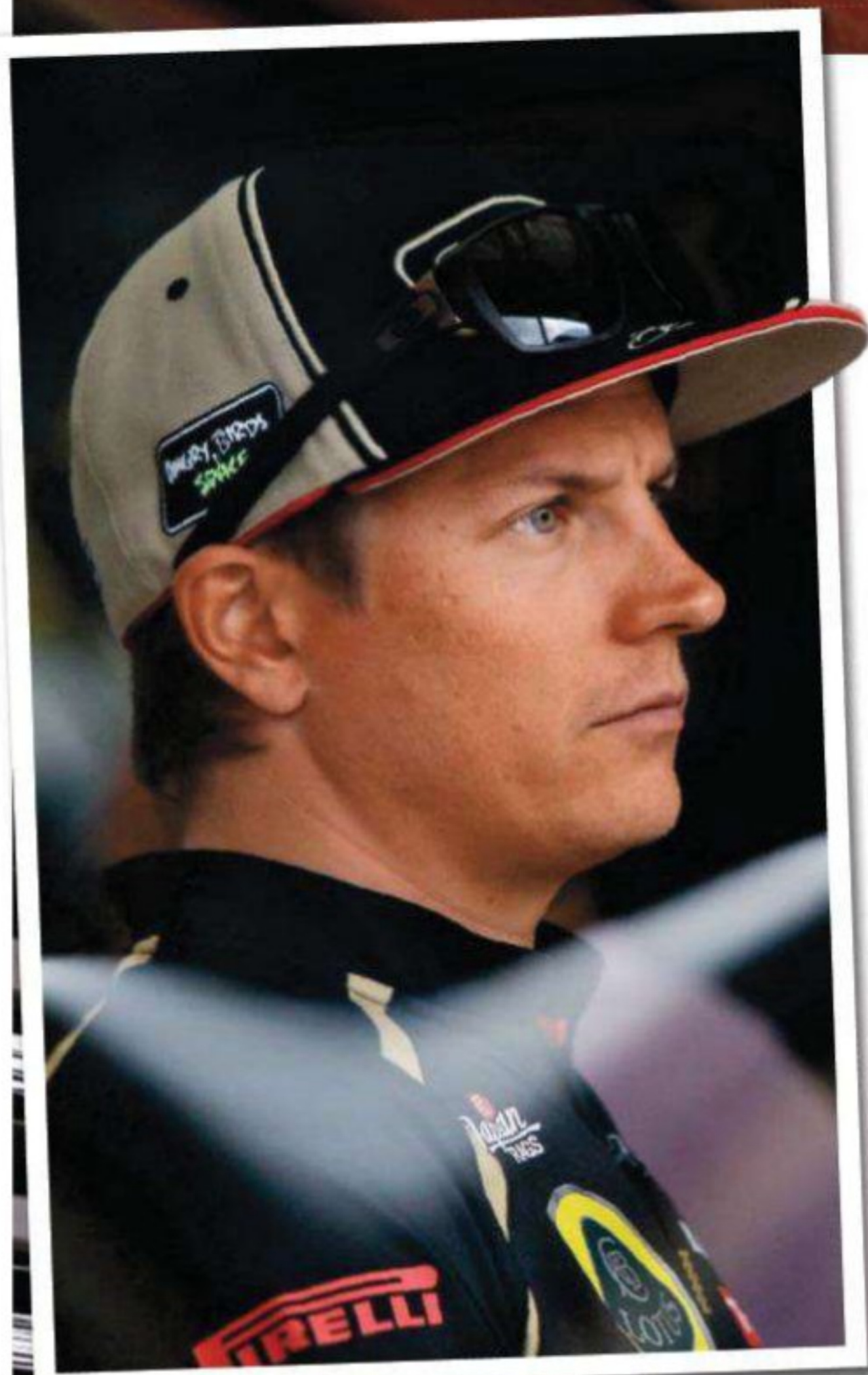
### JULIAN ROUSE Arden sporting director

"He's a driver you expect to light up the timing screen whenever you send him out. There's a constant hunger from him to always want to learn how to improve his driving as well as how to help the team improve the car. He's a driver with one of the highest abilities I've seen as far as having the whole package. He has a very high level of adaptability in his driving, so he can deal with a lot of different circumstances. He's a very intelligent young lad, so he was quickly able to understand what was required to get the most out of the World Series car. Wherever he starts, I have 100 per cent confidence he will only go forwards."

# 7 KIMI RAIKKONEN

RE-ENTRY FROM 2009 (15TH)

## 3rd in F1 in Lotus-Renault



There were those who expected Kimi Raikkonen's Formula 1 return to be a dismal failure. Others were confident that his prodigious ability would out. In the end, it was the second viewpoint that prevailed and the Finn established himself as the beacon of consistency among drivers in 2012. But for all his protestations to the contrary, saying that "I never had any issues with motivation", there were legitimate questions to be answered by the man who admitted he didn't participate in last year's Rally Australia on the basis that "it's that far away and I don't like to travel so much now".

While there were a few occasions during 2012 when his travel plans were far from perfect, on-track he did a very good job. He never quite clawed his way into title contention, but he was a clear third in the standings. He completed all but one lap of the season, losing just one in the finale at Interlagos after a brief navigational problem following an off, and he scored in 19 out of 20 races.

The crowning glory was the victory in Abu Dhabi, where he cemented his legend with his infamous radio messages asking the team to "leave me alone" and telling them "yes, yes, yes, yes, I'm doing it" when reminded about keeping his tyres warm under the safety car on his way to a comeback victory. It was one of the most impressive F1



Kimi's 2012 was a successful comeback

returns we've seen, even if it did take him half a season to shake off the rust.

The key to the success appears to be the Lotus team's willingness to indulge Raikkonen. He missed the pre-weekend media briefings in Brazil, only turning up in time for a sponsor on the Thursday evening, for example. Team principal Eric Boullier, a shrewd reader of drivers, recognised the need to allow a little leeway for a driver with a notoriously low tolerance threshold for anything in F1 that doesn't involve either driving the car fast, or making it go quicker.

"There are lots of different things and nice things other than Formula 1 in life," said Raikkonen. "And I do some of them. That's what I like to do. Every sport, you have certain rules and every job you have certain rules. I live my life outside of work as I want. It's nothing to do with what I do here. As long as I do my work 100 per cent, it doesn't bother me what I do."



Raikkonen won under lights in Abu Dhabi



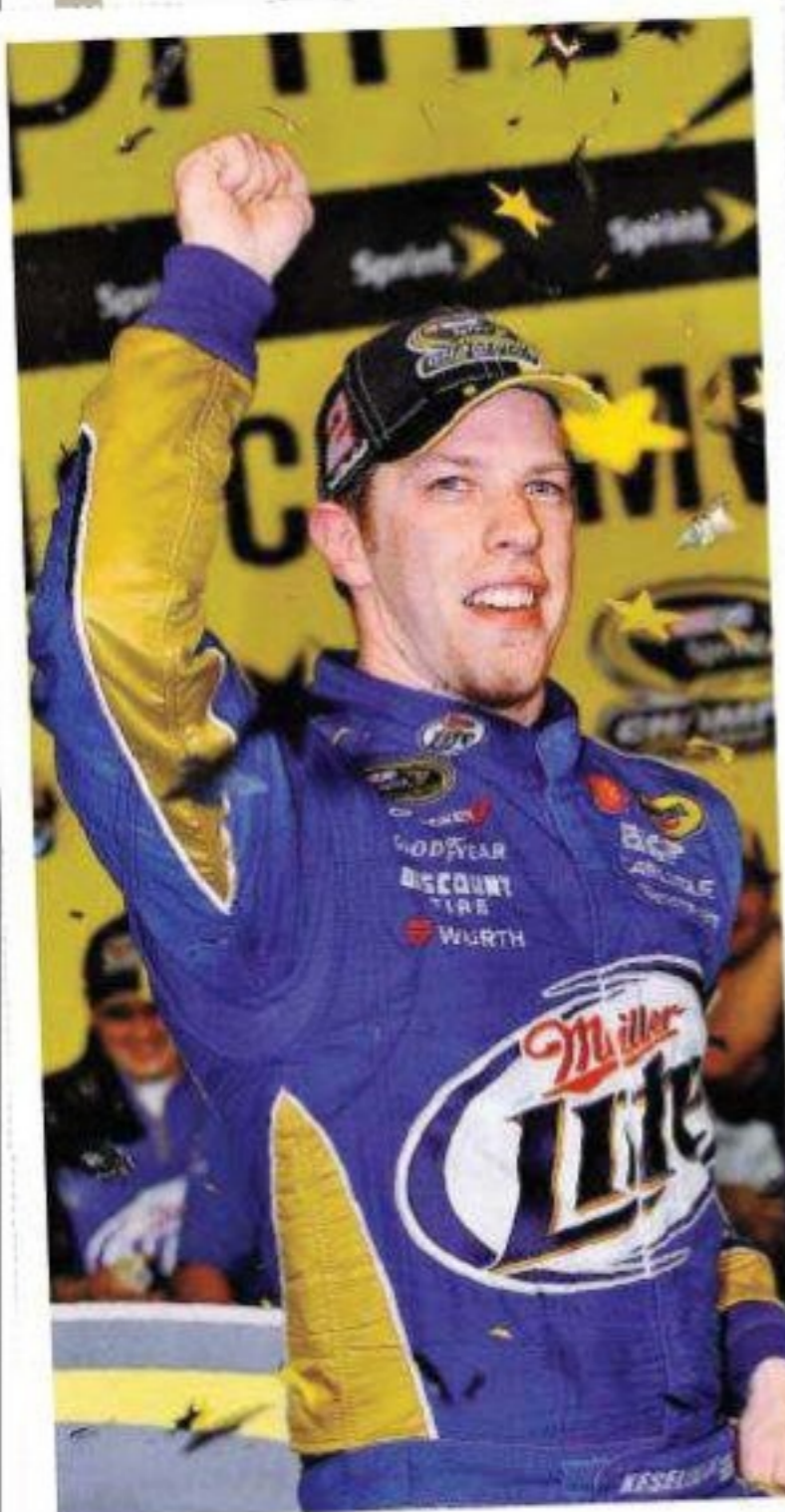
Penske ace took five 2012 victories



# 6 BRAD KESELOWSKI

▲ UP 23

## NASCAR Cup champion in Penske Dodge



Whichever way you look at it, Brad Keselowski is now in fine company. For starters he's the first man to win the title at the wheel of a Dodge since 'The King' Richard Petty bagged back-to-back titles in a Charger in 1974/75. In fact, he's only the fourth man to take NASCAR's top honour driving a Dodge.

But much more significantly, he's the first man to win the Cup for Roger Penske. This means Keselowski has succeeded where a succession of great men failed. Penske first entered a NASCAR race with the legendary Mark Donohue in 1972, although 'The Captain' didn't enter the stock car fray full-time until 1976, when future series champion Bobby Allison was his driver.

But it was Rusty Wallace who came closest to achieving the feat Keselowski finally pulled off this

year. With Miller sponsorship on board, in 1991 Penske entered the 'Blue Deuce' for Wallace. He won 10 races in '93 but was pipped to the Cup by the more consistent Dale Earnhardt. Wallace won eight times in '94 but again lost out to Earnhardt and Mark Martin.

When Wallace retired from full-time competition at the end of 2005, '04 Cup winner Kurt Busch took over the #2. But despite taking 10 wins during his time there, he never finished higher than fourth in the series.

Indeed it was Busch's falling out with Penske that promoted Keselowski to team leader. He'd had a stellar end to 2011 and continued that run into '12, winning five races and scoring a further eight top-five finishes.

Great fuel-saving skills, combined with a mechanic's understanding



Keselowski gave Dodge farewell title

of the car, meant Keselowski was generally a threat everywhere - the venues for his first two wins of the season, Bristol's half-mile 'Thunderdrome' and the 2.66-mile Talladega Superspeedway, could hardly be more different.

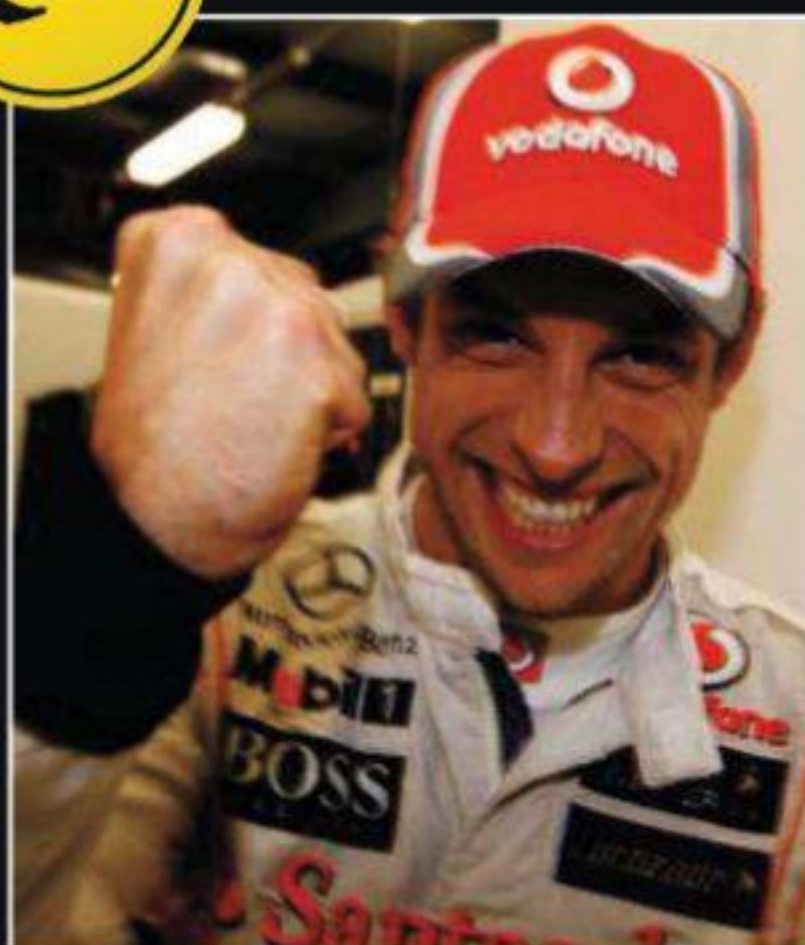
But inevitably it was Keselowski's consistency that was key. Only four times was he classified in the 30s - including at the Daytona 500 where he crashed out - but elsewhere he (and his car) were a model of dependability, something his Penske predecessors lacked.

# 5 JENSON BUTTON

▼ DOWN 3

## 5th in F1 in McLaren-Mercedes

Q&A



**What do you take from the 2012 season, which was quite mixed for you?**

It's not been the smoothest of seasons, with lots of ups and downs. It started on a massive high, winning in Australia. We always said that if we had good winter testing, we would have a great season but it didn't quite work out like that. But there have been some great victories. As a team, we had as many victories as Red Bull.

**How disappointing was it not to challenge for the title given the pace of the car?**

The speed was there a lot this season, but the consistency hurt us. We obviously had a couple of problems with reliability as well. It's not been perfect, but we know exactly where we need to improve. It's about understanding the issues and improving on them for next season. There's a lot of interesting things going on within the team at the moment. It's good to see that when you have a problem, they are straight on it.

**You started 2012 extremely well, but you had a bad stretch from Bahrain through to Silverstone, scoring seven points in six races. What went wrong?**

We had a problem with the heating of the tyres and understanding the tyres. We tried a few new things to help with that and we did get the temperature into the tyres, but it destroyed them as well. We had that for a couple of races and it didn't work out, so we went back. I then felt happy in the car, but it wasn't that quick until we got the upgrade at Hockenheim. That worked well and

we had a chance of challenging for victory in most of the races since.

**Do you expect 2013 to be better?**

It has been an OK season but not one that I look back on and think it was one of the best. I'm looking forward to putting that right in 2013 and challenging the little German guy.

**You again shone on slicks on a damp track in 2012, particularly in Brazil. What's your secret?**

I think it's because I feel more through my body rather than through my eyes to get the feeling of the car on the circuit. When people see it's raining, they immediately get worried that there's going to be no grip. It's tricky, because every situation is different, every circuit's grip level is different and it works differently with the rain. It's about feeling it through the car rather than just looking at the rain, seeing it's wet and thinking you have to brake early and be steady through the corners. I really like it when the circuit is changing all the time, trying to find the grip, modulating the brakes and steering. It seems to work out for me and those races are nice!

Button starred when things got slippery

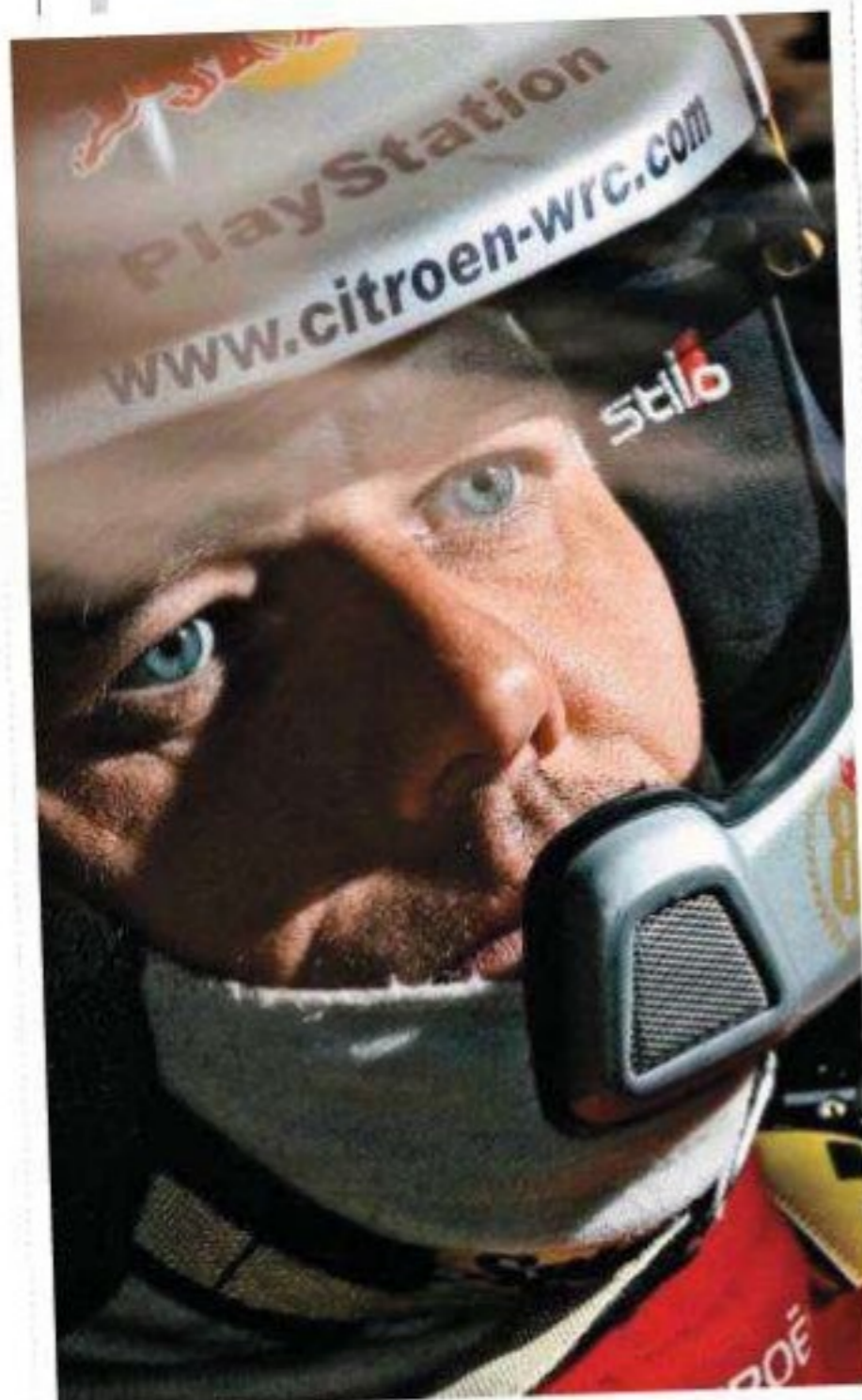




# 4 SEBASTIEN LOEB

▲ UP 3

## WRC champion with Citroen



Sebastien Loeb is arguing with himself.

"Once?" he says, inquisitively. "Non. Twice!" He's trying to remember how many times he made mistakes in this year's World Rally Championship.

"Portugal was the first," he confirms [largely to himself]. "And the second... where was that?"

A bit of prompting about his suspension-biffing bang in Spain, and his memory returns.

"Yes, I remember," he says, brow visibly unfurrowing as the smile returns. "But, the championship was won then - so that one doesn't count!"

And the rest of the year? The other 11 rallies netted nine wins, a second and a sixth. A sixth?

He knows. He's on it. It's why he's going back to Sweden again next year.

"I want to try and stay on the road, just once," he laughs.

And if he stays on the road, he'll win. Nothing changes for the one with nine titles. Except next season it's all change and he's going racing. Will he miss the

world he's made his own for nine years?

"No," he says. "If I would miss it, I wouldn't be leaving. Actually, I will miss some things. I will miss the sensation of driving the car flat-out all of the time. But that's why I'm going racing."

Talk to Loeb about his legacy and he bats the question away. He's way too self-effacing for anything like that. The most successful world rally driver ever to walk the planet he may be, but when it comes down to it he's still Seb, the likeable little fella from Alsace. And always will be. Seventy-six wins down the road, he's still as approachable and unaffected as ever.

And this was as strong a season as any for Loeb and his Citroen team. Nobody had the pace to hold a candle to the number-one DS3. The year's highlight for Loeb was France and a second hometown title celebration in three years; the year's highlight for the rest of us? Finland. He drove it like a local, took the win like a Finn.

The sport won't be the same without him, but nobody could argue he's going out on the highest of highs.

# 3 SEBASTIAN VETTEL

▼ DOWN 2

## F1 champion in Red Bull-Renault

Q&A



**Just how difficult was this year? There must have been times when you feared it wasn't going to happen?**  
Not really. We didn't think at any stage that it was not going to happen. We always had the target and the belief. We are a big group of people at the track and in the factory and, if everyone shows they believe there is a certain dynamic in the group, that strengthens you. You keep believing even if you have a difficult series of races and the gap to the championship lead grows bigger.

**How you would summarise 2012?**  
It has been very up and down and very long and very hard with the flyaways at the end, with a lot of stress for all of us. It was tough to stay fit, stay ready, but it wasn't difficult to stay motivated. The last race summed up the whole season.

**Have you now had the chance to look at the footage of the crash on the first lap at Interlagos?**  
How that exhaust survived, how Adrian [Newey] managed to cover it, is unbelievable. It was a very hard hit and Senna came from a long way back. He wasn't right behind me - it was di Resta, then another car, then Raikkonen and then Bruno. It was drizzling before the start of the race. Turn 1 was fine but we could feel on the reconnaissance lap that Turn 4 was a bit tricky; he was just a little bit late. It's easy to recover when you brake too early, but not so much when you brake too late and from then on it was clear he would not hit the apex but he hit me instead. I damaged both sides, lost a lot of power but we carried on.

**How did it feel to win?**  
Brazil was crazy - it couldn't have been crazier. To know we had won it after a challenging season was a great feeling.



Vettel narrowly held onto his F1 crown



# 2

# LEWIS HAMILTON

▲ UP 6



## 4th in F1 in McLaren-Mercedes

As far as world championship challenges go, Lewis Hamilton has had stronger years than 2012. And he won more races in his title season of '08 than he did this year. But arguably he has never driven better than he did on his way to a distant fourth this time around. He bounced back remarkably from an '11 season during which his undoubted pace was tempered by cack-handed errors and off-track worries.

"The only thing that ever gets in your way is your own mind and your own insecurities or obstacles that you put in your way," said Hamilton before the start of pre-season testing. "The most important thing is to put those things aside and to overcome them and I think I have. So I feel right. Standing right in front of you, I feel stronger than I was a few months ago, but even more so than I was at the start of last year."

Such pronouncements are often meaningless, but Hamilton's performances justified it. Considering that he spent much of the year grappling with deciding whether or not to leave McLaren - something he later described as the hardest choice he's ever had to make - and dealing with

media questions about it, his mental strength was beyond question in 2012.

Hamilton was never anything less than fast, hammering team-mate Jenson Button 16-4 in qualifying. In the races, there was no repeat of the litany of errors of the year before. Only in the European Grand Prix, when Hamilton should not have put himself in harm's way in a futile attempt to defend third from Pastor Maldonado, resulting in the Venezuelan driving into him, could he be criticised.

He won four races, the best being after an opportunist pass on Sebastian Vettel at Austin, but a further four victories were taken from him by McLaren's qualifying fuelling blunder in Spain and retirements while leading in Singapore, Abu Dhabi and Brazil. Add the 96 points lost in those races to those squandered by McLaren's repeated pitstop snafus early in the year, and it's not hard to plot a course that would have left him in the title fight to the end.

"It has been a good year," reflected Hamilton. "Obviously, we would have loved to be competing for the championship at the end, but it has probably been one of the better years."



Hamilton started 2012 with first of seven poles

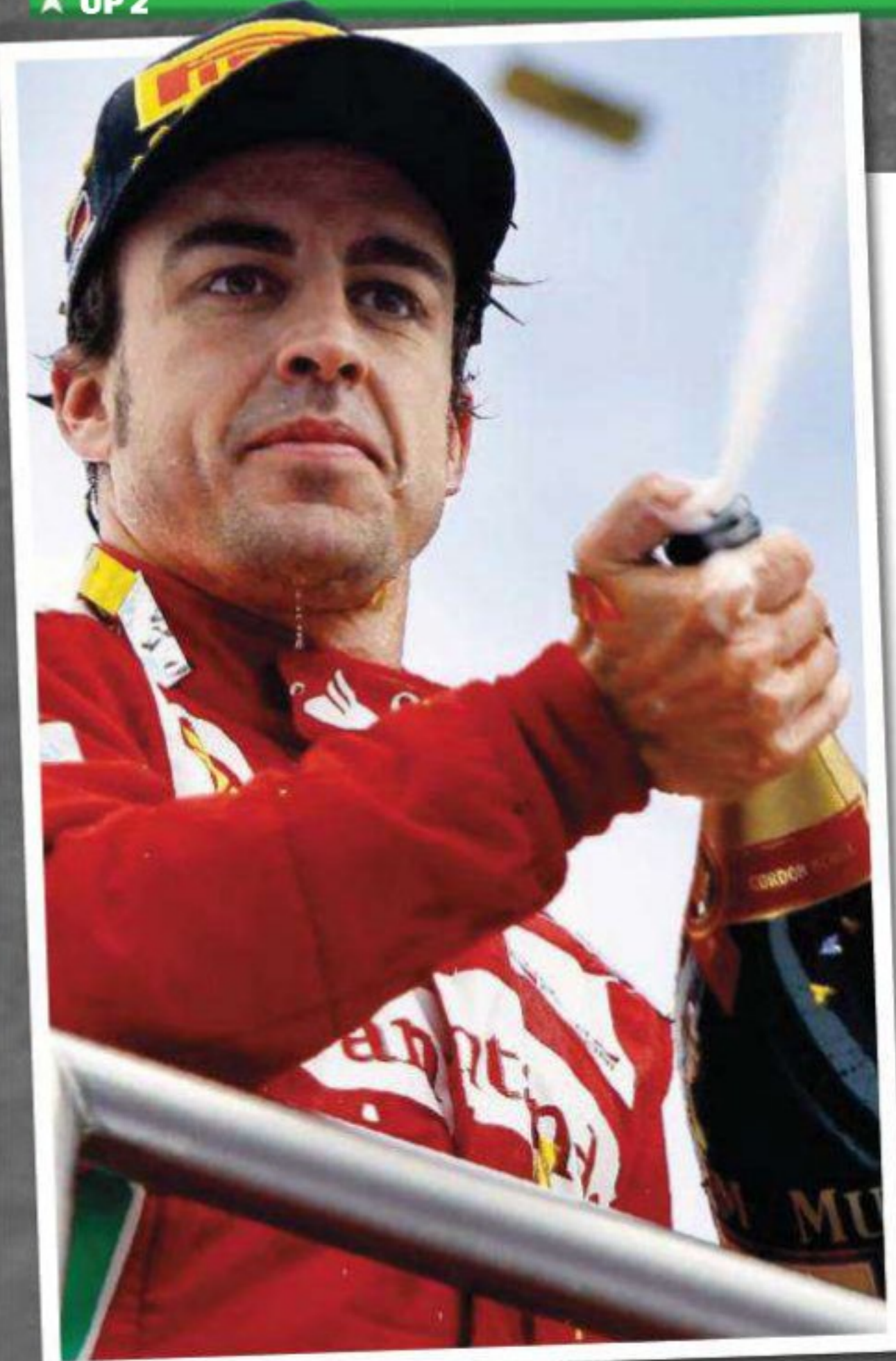
Alonso: lost to Vettel, but beat Giau and Delahaye...



# 1 FERNANDO ALONSO

▲ UP 2

## 2nd in F1 in Ferrari



He went into the final round of the championship trailing his main title rival, following a season of consistently good performances. A truly stunning drive in that last race appeared to be enough, but the result hung in doubt afterwards due to a lingering debate over whether a key passing move took place under yellow flags or not.

This wasn't Ferrari's Fernando Alonso in 2012, but a teenaged Spanish wonderkid competing in his first season in cars, in the 1999 Euro Open by Nissan series. His then manager, and owner of the team he raced for, was Adrian Campos, and he picks up the story...

"Going into the final race Fernando was in between Manuel Giau and Laurent Delahaye, the two other contenders for the championship. In the end it was like what happened at Interlagos [with Sebastian Vettel] - back then I was on the radio and said, 'Maybe you overtake with the yellow flag?' and he replied, 'No! No! No! I didn't, I overtake before the yellow flag.'

"After the race there was a lot going on, and when the trophies were handed out we didn't get one because it was

under appeal. But in the end we saw on the circuit cameras that he had passed just before [the yellow], and he knew exactly what had happened. And that's the thing with Fernando, even at that age - and within just a few metres - he was completely sure what he was doing. It was unbelievable."

Campos spotted the 17-year-old Alonso karting and was instantly sure he was a star in the making. But at the time motorsport in Spain was almost exclusively based around bikes. It made finding money hard - Alonso's family is not wealthy - but Campos persevered.

"Obviously I was in love! I was completely sure that he could become world champion and I was telling this to everyone like I was crazy!" he smiles.

Having twice been proved right, Campos says Alonso is still improving: "The last two races I expected more, but the five or six races before then he was just getting better. I thought each race was the best he'd driven and then at the next one he'd go even better again.

"I don't think we saw the real Fernando in the final two races, but that's just my humble opinion."

**DISAGREE WITH OUR LIST?** Join the debate on our facebook page 



# GREAT BIKE: DALLARA ZBIKE

Dallara is one of the world's leading racecar constructors, but during the summer it was the company's efforts for Olympic hero Alex Zanardi that caught the attention. By *MARK GLENDENNING*

## AERO

Just like in motorsport, one of the aims was to make the handbike as aero efficient as possible. But it was here that Dallara hit one of its biggest hurdles.

"The regulations for handbikes are not really well written," said Dallara designer Giacomo Bussolati. "It says that you cannot have aerodynamic shapes, but it's not like F1 where the rules say: 'the length must be this.' This was a bit difficult, because we were obviously designing aerodynamic surfaces, so they could not be too visible."

Bussolati states that they solved the problem by resorting to simple guesswork.

"We'd design a surface and ask ourselves, 'is this too aerodynamic?' And if the answer was 'yes', we'd change it."

## SAFE - BUT NOT TOO SAFE

As well as being light, Zanardi's single-piece chassis was extraordinarily stiff. For Dallara, the trick was finding the sweet spot between strength and speed. An initial version of the bike was actually rejected by Zanardi for being too conservative.

"When we design a race car, we know how to calculate the loads that go into the car," said Bussolati.

"But for a handbike, it was a little bit difficult to know how safe to make the chassis. On one hand, if we make the chassis safer, we also increase the weight. On the other hand, we didn't want to see Alessandro with a broken handbike during the Olympics.

"When he tested the first bike he said that it was too strong and asked us to decrease the stiffness and strength of the chassis, and take some weight out. The second chassis we designed was the one he used in his races."

### CAMBER IS KING

On a car, camber improves stability in corners, but bike wheels are designed to be fitted perfectly straight. However, by inducing camber, part of the front surface of the wheel falls behind the rider's back, giving an aero advantage by reducing the amount of drag. The trade-off is that it creates more friction, because bike wheel bearings are only equipped to deal with axial loads, whereas camber forces them to handle radial loads as well. Dallara found specialist bearings to counter that, and worked out a compromise between what would be gained in drag and lost to friction.

### SEATING POSITION

Zanardi's seating position was critical for optimising the amount of power he could generate with his arms. He had done extensive work on it independently, but Dallara took the idea further by taking a full 3D scan of Zanardi on his previous bike and looking for ways to perfect aero efficiency without compromising his position.

### F1 DNA

Dallara had some leftover F1 carbonfibre from its HRT project, which was appropriated for Zanardi's handbike - the material used to make the bike is actually of a higher specification than that used to make a GP2 car. The monocoque was built from a layer of T1000 carbonfibre over a Kevlar skin, with a 3mm core.



### GIACOMO BUSSOLATI

(CHASSIS PROJECT LEADER, DALLARA)

#### How long did the project take?

We spent a lot of time on it. I don't know if we can say how much, because everyone was so excited to do it that we worked on it at night, we thought about it at home. So we probably spent a bit more time on it than what we told Mr Dallara.

#### How much did the bike weigh?

It depended which parts Alessandro put on his bike, because he used different wheels and things for different races. In the configuration

that we tested it, it was around 9.2 kg. But the nice thing was that the chassis, which is what we actually produced, was 35 per cent lighter than his old one.

#### Was it an enjoyable project to work on?

Very much so. All my friends ask me much more questions about Alessandro's handbike than the F1 car we designed for HRT. My job was the same - I was chassis group leader for both projects. But everyone is much more interested in the handbike.



**P72 ZANARDI'S STORY**



Another golden moment: Zanardi is a true champion

# ZANARDI IMPROVING MAN AND MACHINE

Alex Zanardi was one of the stars of this year's Paralympic Games. *MARK GLENDENNING* caught up with the former Indycar champion and discovered that motorsport experience was a key part of his success

ZANARDI HANDBIKE HIGHLIGHTS
Winner - 2009 Venice Marathon
Winner 2010 Rome Marathon
Silver - 2011 UCI World Road Paracycling Championships
Winner - 2011 New York Marathon
Gold, Individual H4 time trial - 2012 London Paralympics
Gold, Individual H4 road race - 2012 London Paralympics
Silver, Mixed H1-4 team relay - 2012 London Paralympics

Every day, for months, the routine remained the same. There was the training, but for Alex Zanardi, that was only part of his preparations for the London Paralympics.

The most important bit came later. That's when he'd take his handbike back to the garden shed that he'd converted to a sort of handcycling man-cave, plonk himself on the floor, and simply look at the bike and think. Hours would pass. Eventually, he'd be called in for dinner.

"You don't know how many hours I've spent lying on the floor looking at my bicycle," says Zanardi.

With someone as easily romanticised as Zanardi, it's easy to imagine that the time in the shed was spent visualising himself rising to the challenge of beating the best in the world, or reflecting on the journey that had led him to that point in the first place. Wrong. Instead, that time was spent in an internal dialogue between Zanardi the rider/athlete and Zanardi the engineer/tinkerer.

The problem that Zanardi was trying to solve was one for power transferal from the cranks to the wheels. Able-bodied athletes have more or less the same body shape, so optimising a conventional bike comes down to shifting a couple of components a few millimetres either way. That's not the case for Paralympians, where the factors such as degree of amputation can affect everything from weight to seating position.

It means there are huge gains to be made if a rider can devise a bike

that perfectly exploits their strengths.

"I was trying to imagine myself in a different position on the bike," Zanardi says. "In paracycling, your needs are quite different to those of other athletes, and it's natural that you need different vehicles. The bike that is right for me will not be as good for another athlete.

"That's where I think in the past year, not only was I able to match my opponents, but actually surpass them. In their minds, their training was the only area they could gain time. I certainly worked really hard in that department, but it also helped that in developing my vehicle, I discovered a [seating] position that could allow me to deliver my talents in the best possible way."

The London bike that Zanardi developed in conjunction with Dallara was born out of customisation work the 46-year-old had been doing with his previous bikes for the past two years. For most of his recent Paralympic career, Zanardi had great success with custom-built bikes from Swiss manufacturer Carbonbike. These bikes were already heavily individualised, including an early version of the distinctive carbonfibre monocoque of his London bike.

"I did a lot of work myself to manufacture the first seat from a mould in a little workshop that belongs to some friends near Bologna," he says.

"They work with carbonfibre for other purposes, so I went to them with that mould and from that we made the first seat from fibreglass.

We then used it as the mould to make a final carbonfibre seat, which is basically a sort of Cinderella shoe because I am probably the only one who can fit in it."

It was at this point that Zanardi enlisted the help of Dallara to transform his bike from a group of components hanging from a frame to something approaching an integrated whole: a machine designed with the sole purpose of helping to propel a man across the ground under his own power quicker than anyone else in the world. Two individual gold medals and a silver in the relay would suggest it worked.

But as Lance Armstrong famously wrote, it's not about the bike. At least, not all of it. Recent events suggest that for Armstrong, it was also about lacing his blood, but in Zanardi's case, the other key was technique.

"My legs, my wounds, are quite short, so it's hard to [get the leverage] to transfer power [into the cranks]," he says. "But for me we found something very efficient, because throughout the time trial, I push [the cranks] much more than I pull. This is something that allows me to stay in a position that is quite aerodynamic, and therefore I am a very good time trialist.

"But I'm also a very good sprinter, because when it comes down to just giving everything you have for the final 20 seconds of the race, I start to pull much stronger than I push, and the way I can do that is by tightening all the muscles of my gluteus and therefore I can deliver that for a few seconds.

"It would be very tiring for several minutes, but if it's just for 20 seconds, I can do it. I use muscles that have not been used for 99 per cent of my race, so I am relatively fresh for that kind of effort."

Zanardi has had to learn his new sport fast, but it's not an exaggeration to say that he has raised the game. As well as rethinking the bike itself, he also took on a new coach and embraced a new training philosophy in preparation for the Games. He admits that he is still working out how much potential remains untapped.

"It has been a very fast process. In two years I went from knowing nothing to winning two gold medals," he says. "I was not the youngest in the field and I was not superior in any one area. But I was able to put together the most from my training, out of the development of the bicycle, out of the equipment.

"This is not just because I'm called Zanardi and I have access to a windtunnel. It's because I found a way to evaluate the difference between all these items that is far more efficient than the windtunnel. But I will not tell you what it is, because that's my secret!"

That sounds like good news for anyone who likes seeing guys racing at over 40mph under hand-power – and bad news for any Paracyclists targeting the 2016 Games in Rio. ☺





# F3 CAR

**Donington is indigenous territory for two very different kinds of F3 machinery. But which**

**D**onington in September, and a small crowd begins to gather outside the Fortec Motorsport garage in the pitlane. The morning's British F3 test has just finished, and there's about to be a runout of an entirely different kind of F3: instead of the ubiquitous Dallara F312, it's the brand-new MV Agusta F3 bike that's grabbing the attention.

We're here to report on a comparison 'race' between F3 car and bike: F3 versus F3. Representing four wheels is Fortec's Macau Grand Prix pole position


sensation Alex Lynn, and he's one of the group of guys standing around admiring the bike. Team-mates Felix Serralles, Pipo Derani and Hannes van Asseldonk have also wandered over, and a couple traipse over from the Carlin garage. Lynn started out in motocross as a kid, and you can tell he's itching to climb on the MV, but a couple of the Fortec mechanics are joshing him that he wouldn't last a lap, and there is the matter of a race weekend looming...

Upholding two-wheel honour is *Fast Bikes* writer Alastair Fagan, a veteran of

British Superbikes, Supersport, Superstock, and now Thundersport GB on a Suzuki SV650 Supertwin. He's also developing a bike for the Isle of Man TT, so he's quite clearly of questionable sanity and therefore the ideal man to gun a two-wheeler he's never ridden straight out of the trailer.

The MV slots into the biking ladder in a reasonably similar place to where the Dallara slots into the car landscape. It's a 675 triple-cylinder and, says, Fagan, "essentially a copy of what Triumph did with the best bike in

Knee down! No,  
not you Alex...



# W F3 BIKE

## gets round the circuit best? *MARCUS SIMMONS* goes along to find out

the class. OK it's road registered, but you can't ride it slowly! This is an out-and-out track bike."

He adds that, although none have raced yet, a couple have gone pretty well in testing and should prove a decent weapon in British Supersport, while the WPR team is talking of sending one to the Isle of Man for William Dunlop.

Their positioning in the relative bike/car hierarchies is pretty much where the similarities end. To be fair, this is going to be pretty much the most one-sided race at Donington since the German

leviathans last came over to beat our jolly chaps with their ERAs and Frazer Nashes in the 1930s, but it's a great opportunity to delve into some of the techniques of driving – and riding – F3 machinery.

First we'll look at the start, where the car beats the bike's 0-60mph time with 2.8 seconds to 3.4. With F3 races being relatively short, the cars having a lot of aero compared to power and the Cooper Tires rubber in the British series having a very small drop-off, qualifying and starts are critical, because once you've got through the first corner you're not

going to get much chance to overtake.

"Because F3 is an open formula, we get the luxury of creating our own starting system," says Lynn. "Well, it's not so much a system, but a handbrake device. Every team's got a different one.

"The main importance before the start is to get the brakes hotting up to then transfer heat through the wheelrim, which then heats the sidewall of the tyre. So you've got to weave as fast as you can on the green-flag lap and brake to generate sideload through the tyre, and that generates heat through the sidewall, ▶

◀ not just the tyre. If you just weaved without braking, that would just heat up the top, which would then create graining when you went flat-out.

“If you’re on pole, you back the pack up two corners from the line, to second or first-gear pace, and probably do about five or six burnouts to the line. F3 cars have got enough power to break traction if you flick the car, without using the clutch – whereas in Formula Renault you have to use it to break traction.

“You pull up to the line, pull the handbrake up, and that holds the car at about 20 bar, probably about a quarter of the force on the rear brakes. You’re in neutral, but as soon as the five-second board comes out you put it into first, and then there’s a bit of guesswork when you go to pre-load the car on the clutch. You’re flat on the throttle and the car’s sitting on the limiter, but as you pull the clutch out you feel the car squatting and the engine revs start dying, as it really wants to go. I do it until I feel the car creeping and you pull it back from there and wait for the lights. It’s a huge amount of force and the engines really don’t like it, but it’s the quickest way.

“Then as soon as the lights go out you don’t move your feet at all – you just flip the handbrake off, wait and it will get the launch. As soon as it

finishes its launch you pull the clutch out completely and you’re gone. That’s how it should go anyway, but the conditions can make it different...

“When we go to European races, and it’s a hot weekend and the DTM cars have put a load of rubber down, when you flip the handbrake off the engine can just go ‘bleeeuuuuuggghhh’ because there’s not enough power to pull the car off the rubber on the track. In the UK we don’t have that problem a lot! You can also get the engine dying if you’ve pre-loaded the car too much, in which case you’ll dab the clutch and slip it to get the revs back up. Or if you have too much wheelspin you have to back off and control it. The rule of thumb is you’re better off with wheelspin than bogging.”

The MV bike may be full of gizmos – “I was just tapping buttons as I went around the circuit, trying them all,” admits Fagan – but the starting technique is rather simpler than on the car. “To be honest, not many people have ridden it apart from those on the launch,” he adds. “Like most 600s it’s a case of screaming it and dumping the clutch. You hold it on the brake, keep the front down and use a bit more clutch. The back end doesn’t move around at all.”

The first half of the Donington lap is fast and flowing, all fifth and sixth-gear



Lynn gets set for 1m22s snorter





Which of these two is braver?

## ENGINEER'S VIEW: F3 IS GREAT TO WORK WITH

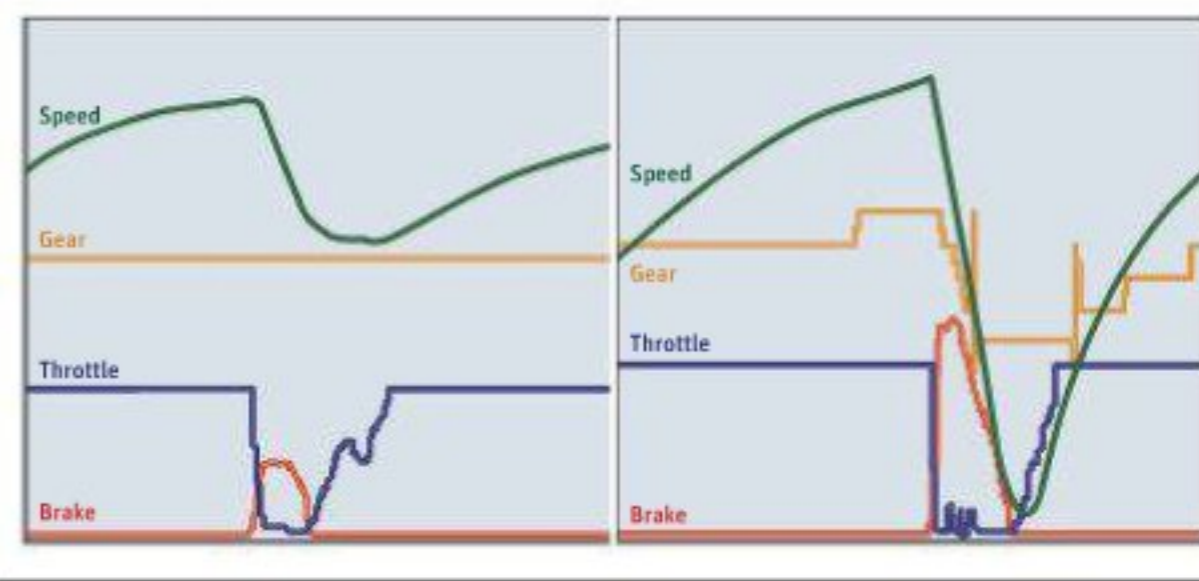
"The F3 Dallara is a great car to work on," says Fortec Motorsport chief engineer Andi Scott, who has been with the company's F3 squad since 2004. "The fact that F3 is still an open category and you can do whatever you want with the car mechanically is great."

Looking at Alex Lynn's data at the Old Hairpin (graph on left, below), you can see that now he is rid of his understeer (see main text) and is instead giving it a brake on entry rather than just rolling off the power. There is a small pause on the power on exit. "You go into a bit of a compression at the apex and it goes light on the apex, so they have a little play with the throttle," says Scott. "And the exit kerb there can be quite harsh."

At the Melbourne hairpin (graph on right), what is impressive is that Lynn is hard on the power without having to modulate because of any break in traction. "They were all saying that," adds Scott. "There was a lot of grip there."

### SPEED COMPARISONS

	Dallara F312	MV Agusta F3
Redgate (minimum speed)	83mph	65mph
Old Hairpin (minimum)	122mph	80mph
Coppice (minimum)	97mph	73mph
Melbourne (minimum)	41mph	37mph
Finish line	99mph	102mph
Top speed (Donington gearing)	143mph	141mph
0-60mph	2.8s	3.4s



Caution: don't try this in a Dallara

stuff. Oh, hang on a minute, it's second and third on the bike! This is where four wheels massacres two, and Fagan is astounded when Lynn tells him the Old Hairpin is top gear, sometimes without even braking...

"It's a bit off-camber but because of the compression at the bottom you find yourself with quite a bit of grip," Lynn explains. "It was the first corner I learned in an F3 car that the faster you go the more aerodynamic grip you've got – that's a really hard thing to get your head around."

"There are two ways you can take a fast corner in an F3 car: you can stay on the throttle and try to slow it on the brake at the same time; or you can not brake at all and have a bigger lift. If you've got understeer, you're better off having the lift to pitch the weight of the car to the front, and then try to get back on it. If you've got oversteer you want to gently slow it down with the brake, because too much of a balance shift really unsettles the car. I could hear Jack [Harvey, British F3 champion] this morning riding the brake while he was on the throttle this morning, whereas I was having to lift to get the front in."

"Then on exit you need to release the steering. Donington has a really low-grip surface so you have to be smooth; attacking doesn't reward you at all. So you let go of the steering and let it drift towards the edge of the circuit."

Fagan finds the Old Hairpin even

more of an eye-opener on this particular day: "I'm in fourth down the Craner Curves. It's a lift when you dip down to the left kink, just a roll off the throttle a tiny bit to settle it – it's never nice to join the Craner Club! All down there and through the Old Hairpin I couldn't use all the circuit because of the rubber left by the F3 cars – I've never ridden anything like those conditions."

"You slam the brakes on initially and luckily the MV just falls into turns. You want to be a bit careful, because with the camber it drops off when you get to the apex. You just pick up a neutral throttle to settle the front. Also, for a bike it's not so easy to run onto the kerbs – I take it to three or four feet away from the left before getting it back out for Schwantz Curve."

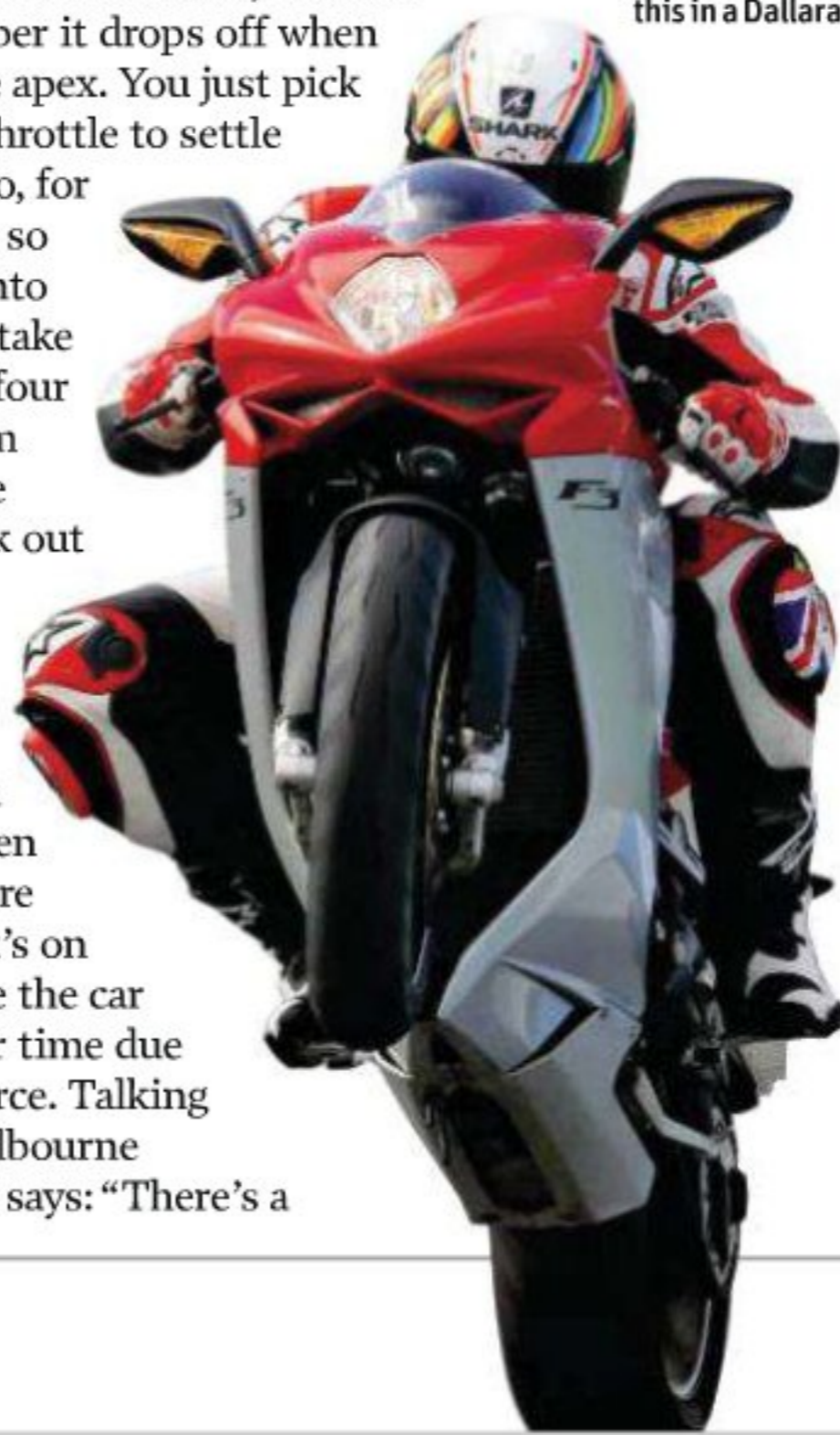
In the slow turns the minimum speeds between car and bike are similar, and it's on braking where the car makes further time due to its downforce. Talking about the Melbourne hairpin, Lynn says: "There's a

small window and it's hard to gauge. You always want to carry the highest minimum speed, but if it's too high the rear end lets go and you're fighting it all the way. Once it's broken traction it's hard to get it back, and you're wasting the little power you have on fighting it rather than driving it."

It's pretty similar on the bike. "Down three gears into first, and then you just have to be careful with the throttle," says Fagan. "When you go from 140mph to 40 on the apex the clutch doesn't like it. You're on road tyres, road suspension and not a lot of ground clearance, so you need to pick up a steady throttle to make it round the corner."

So how did they do? Well, the British Superbike lap record is six seconds slower than Lynn's F3 car went, so a road-going two-wheeler isn't going to stand a chance. Fagan's 1m41s is 19s off, but clearly with more mileage he'd lap at least a couple of seconds off that.

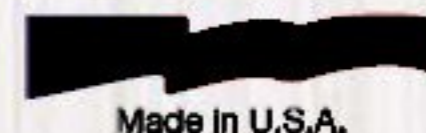
But it's been an interesting glimpse into alternate worlds for both parties. As the banter between Lynn and the Fortec mechanics continues, one of the bike guys says: "It's funny; I thought they'd be all serious." They are, but they also know how to have fun.



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MAGIC MOMENTS

# Memories of the year

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the best motorsport action on  
offer. Here are their highlights...



**← EDD  
STRAW**



Frank Williams sits dispassionately in the garage, following the timing screens intently. It's just like old times, but this is May 2012 and it's Pastor Maldonado who is on his way to one of the most important victories in the history of the team. It's rare as a journalist to become invested in the result, but given the seven-year victory drought for Williams, a period during which there were very serious questions hanging over the future of the team, I'm on the edge of my seat. The moment Maldonado crosses the line and makes Williams win again is indelibly imprinted in my memory... as is what happened not long after.

While waiting to grab a word with chief operations engineer Mark Gillan in the Williams motorhome, everyone is aghast as the television shows pictures of the garage erupting in flames. Fortunately, there were no serious injuries, but it could have been so much worse.



PIC: ETHERINGTON/LAT



## JONATHAN NOBLE



Although he didn't win the world championship, it is hard to look back at 2012 without Fernando Alonso's supreme efforts standing out. It was a year when, for the first time in a while, a driver was able to stand head and shoulders above his machinery.

There are two Alonso moments that really stick out, though. The first was his opportunistic, brave and pinpoint overtaking move past Romain Grosjean at the safety-car restart in Valencia – simply superb.

The second, which showed how he is so central to Ferrari, came in the early hours of one morning in January when he stayed late to entertain the troops from the DJ decks at a party wrapping up his team's pre-season ski camp at Madonna di Campiglio. Here was someone completely locked in with the family around him.

It's such a privilege seeing a man and team so at one with each other – both on and off track.



PIC: DUNBAR/LAT

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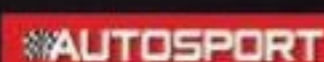
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 **SIMON STRANG**



Cast your mind back to January. Were you absolutely certain, I mean utterly convinced, that Kimi Raikkonen's comeback would be a success? I wasn't. And having watched Michael Schumacher struggle to reach the kind of level we all secretly wished for on his own comeback, I was hopeful, rather than certain that 'The Iceman' would be back to his best this year.

That all changed on a cold Spanish morning in early February. On the first day of testing, the Lotus darted out of the pits, quickly lit up the tyres and Kimi seemed immediately on it.

Fierce and purposeful, the car's body language said it all — Raikkonen wasn't messing about. That's the way it stayed all year. His win in Abu Dhabi then, was a highlight for me. The bravest act of the year? Mike Conway's statement admitting his fear of ovals — that was an act of immense personal courage.

PIC: BERNARD ASSET/LOTUSGP

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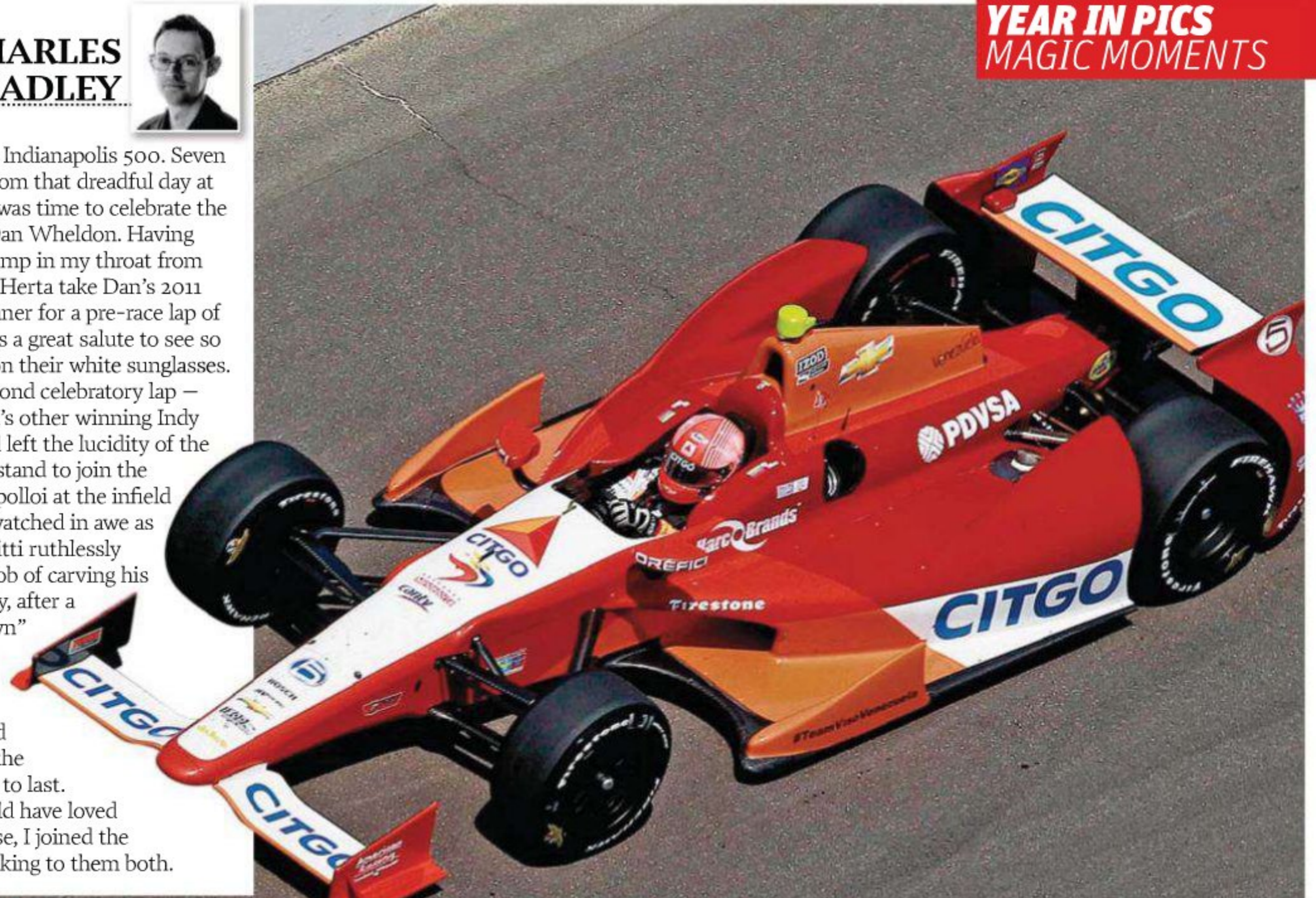
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**CHARLES BRADLEY**



Lap 26 of the Indianapolis 500. Seven months on from that dreadful day at Las Vegas, it was time to celebrate the memory of Dan Wheldon. Having cleared the lump in my throat from seeing Bryan Herta take Dan's 2011 Indy 500 winner for a pre-race lap of honour, it was a great salute to see so many fans don their white sunglasses.

For the second celebratory lap – 98 being Dan's other winning Indy number – I'd left the lucidity of the Turn 1 grandstand to join the drunken hoi polloi at the infield at Turn 4. I watched in awe as Dario Franchitti ruthlessly finished his job of carving his way to victory, after a "fucking clown" (Dario's words on the radio, not mine) had spun him in the pitlane down to last. 'D-Dub' would have loved that. Of course, I joined the locals by drinking to them both.



PIC: LEVITTY/LAT

## JAMIE O'LEARY



Norising. It's only one word, but it tells you everything you need to know about my memory of 2012.

Thanks to the timing of my brother's wedding, I was forced to miss what should have been my maiden visit to the Nuremberg street track last year, but the wait was well worth it.

The Nazi history that surrounds the place is as fascinating as it is harrowing, and a trip up onto the Steintribune to gaze across the paddock (which previously housed thousands of Hitler's supporters) stirred some pretty extreme feelings.

The on-track action was extreme too. After the Esses melted in the horrendously high temperatures of Friday afternoon and cancelled F3 qualifying, Sunday brought flooding and an early end to single-seater proceedings. Not before we'd seen a race without a winner mind.

And then, just when you thought things might settle down, Jamie Green passed Martin Tomczyk at the last corner to win a scintillating DTM race.

Brilliant.





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**GARY WATKINS**



The news rocked me to my core. Peugeot had just announced a sudden and absolute withdrawal from the LMP1 prototype arena, news I was convinced would pull the rug from under the forthcoming FIA World Endurance Championship.

You wait 20 years for a proper world championship for sportscars, you get all excited about a further instalment of one of the most intense rivalries in long-distance racing history, and then it's snatched away. I was distraught.

I swore, and kept swearing for days. Out loud or in my head each time I thought of that shock announcement.

My mood improved bit by bit through the season. First, when Toyota committed to six races and saved the WEC and, then, on the occasion of the starring debut of its TS030 HYBRID at the Le Mans 24 Hours.

And when Alex Wurz and Nicolas Lapierre beat the Audis to give Toyota a maiden victory at Interlagos, the fog finally lifted. I knew, then, that we had a championship and a new super-rivalry.

That dark day of January 18 was forgotten. Well, almost.

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# THE WORLD'S WORST TRACKS

Motorsport has graced some great circuits over the past 100 years, but there have been some stinkers. *GARY WATKINS* looks at the tracks that stood out for the wrong reasons

## JINGKAI STREET CIRCUIT - BEIJING

The late and lamented A1GP World Cup of Motorsport took racing to new markets and new venues all around the globe. And with varying degrees of success. Yet the only success of the Jingkai Street Circuit in Beijing's suburbs is that rounds five and six of the 2006/07 series actually took place.

That didn't look likely just minutes into the already-delayed opening session of free practice. The first drivers got to Turn 8 at the end of the back straight and found themselves stationary staring head-on at the concrete wall on the exit: the A1GP Lola-Zytek didn't have enough lock to make it around the tight hairpin. It was a cock-up of giant proportions that A1GP operations manager John Wickham can't explain even today.

"There was information about the car's turning circle that was provided by Lola," he explains. "Either it was incorrect or it wasn't acted upon properly, and I'm not sure which."

The problem caused consternation in the pits, remembers A1GP Team Switzerland driver Neel Jani. "The first three cars tried to get around and couldn't so the rest of us stayed in the pits," he remembers. "Some drivers then went out, but had to more or less stop and wheelspin to get around."

Then came the inevitable red flags. If the race was to go ahead, a new configuration was going to be required. The quick fix decided upon involved

shortening the section to and from the hairpin – actually two sides of a dual carriageway *a la* Birmingham Superprix, but without the roundabout – and reducing the circuit in length from 1.89 to 1.37 miles.

But the problems for the A1GP contingent didn't stop there. When the action resumed the following day, the hot, sticky tyres started ripping up the manhole covers that everyone thought had been suitably bolted down. The continual delays meant that qualifying was abandoned and the grid set according to times set in what free practice did take place.

Exactly who was responsible for the debacle isn't clear. The circuit had been designed by the Australian D3 Motorsport Development organisation, which was also contracted to run the A1GP events, in conjunction with a local official.

"She was introduced to us as the best person to help design the circuit," recalls Wickham. "I can't remember her name or what qualification she had to design a track."

There had been concerns about the layout even before the aborted first practice session.

"Everyone was saying the run-off at the hairpin wasn't sufficient: if you ran out of brakes you were going to hit the wall hard," explains Jani. "We were all worried but we saw Charlie Whiting [F1's safety delegate] walking around, so we thought everything was OK."



The track wasn't much to write home about, according to Jani. "It was bumpy like hell and boring to drive, because it was mostly 90-degree corners with no chance for overtaking," he says. "There was only one good corner: the chicane was kind of tricky because you could really bang over it."

"A1GP provided some of the best circuits I ever drove on and some of the worst tracks too. And Beijing was definitely in that category."

**Saving grace:** Racing never returned.

**“Boring to drive  
with no chance  
for overtaking”**



### CAESAR'S PALACE - LAS VEGAS

History has done the Caesar's Palace Formula 1 circuit a disservice. The track used for grands prix in 1981 and '82 wasn't as bad as some have suggested; it's the CART track that followed that deserves the slating.

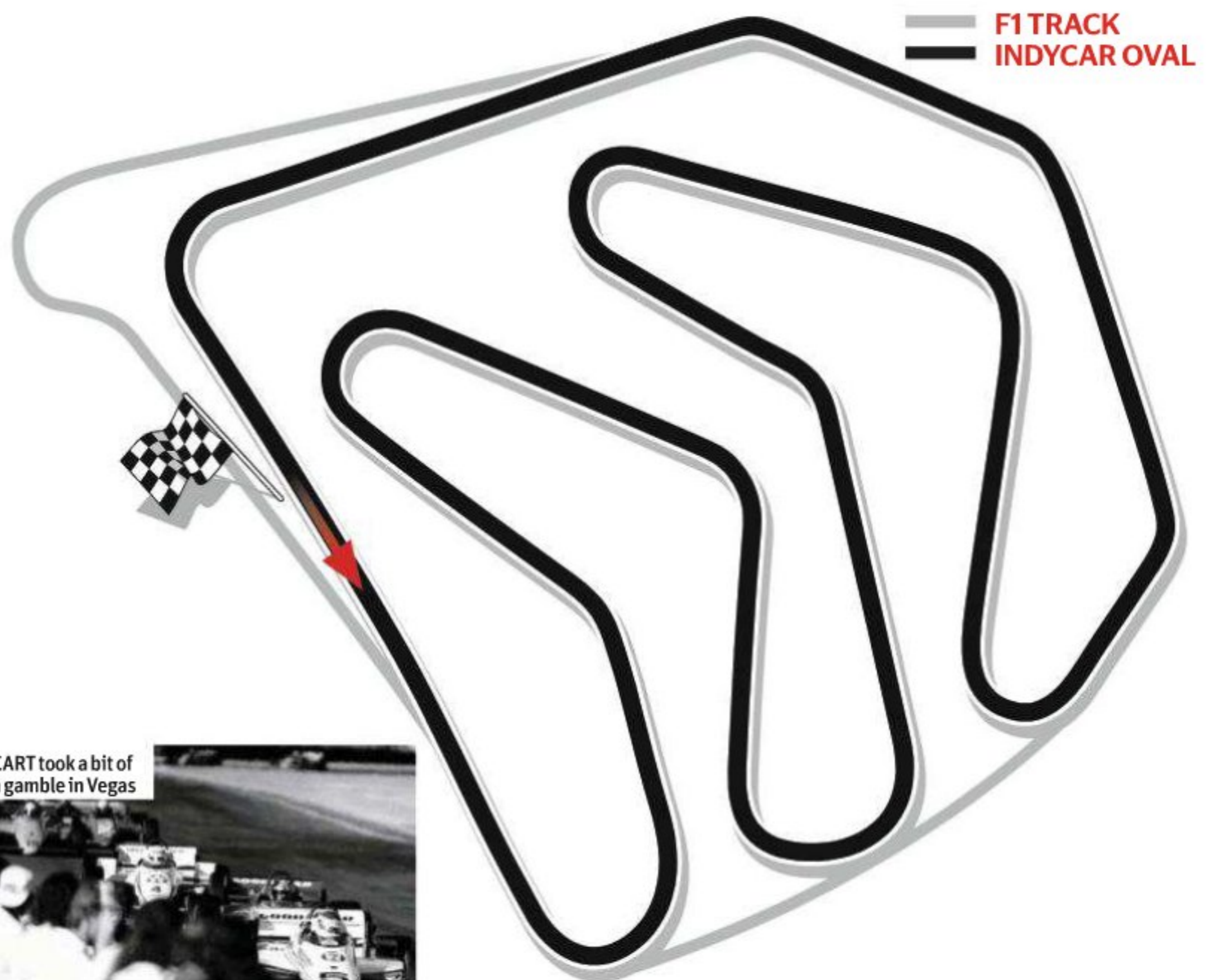
CART took over the Caesar's Palace fixture for 1983, but it didn't race on the road course laid out partly in the carpark of the hotel/casino complex of the same name and partly on undeveloped scrub land. Rather, it created what came to be termed as a 'modified oval' by effectively rounding off the road track.

The five-corner oval that resulted was neither fish nor fowl: it measured 1.13 miles, yet the average speed for a decent qualifying lap was only just over 100mph.

Derek Daly, who qualified on the front row in the inaugural year, doesn't know quite how to explain it.

“It was either a road-course with only left-hand corners or an oval with multi-apex turns and no banking,” he says. “I don't know what it was trying to be. All I know was that it wasn't much of a challenge.”

**Saving grace:** The racing wasn't so bad, just have an internet search for some YouTube footage.



## LONGRIDGE

Taking a kart circuit less than half a mile long and turning it in a proper race track sounds like a bad idea. The fact that Longridge near Preston lasted for just six years before being turned into, of all things, a caravan park probably proves that it was.

The venue that was Longridge had morphed from rally stage to kart track and sprint course into a pukka circuit for 1973. Built in a quarry, it measured 0.43 miles — less than 700 meters in new money — and had just two corners, plus a kink known as the Esses.

So short was the track that it could only start a handful of cars. The first

**NOW A  
CARAVAN  
PARK...**



year, the circuit allowed for just six-car grids, although the maximum rose in subsequent seasons. There were plans for an extension, but the financial viability of a track that could accommodate so few cars was limited. The last race at Longridge took place in September 1978, its short life ending prematurely in more ways than one. The final race of the final meeting was redflagged a few laps short and no one knew the caravans were on their way.

**Saving grace:** Drivers seemed to like the place, including the man who holds the outright lap record for time immemorial. Kim Mather, who blasted a BRM P153 F1 car around in 23.6s, was so captivated that he started his honeymoon there.

"Maybe it wasn't much but, for me, it was brilliant," he says. "It was so good I raced there the day after my wedding!"



Mather's BRM holds lap record — for ever



## ZHUHAI INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT

It was clear that something was wrong in November 1994. A trip out to see the construction site that would become the Zhuhai International Circuit revealed that the hillside had been levelled and a dead-flat landscape introduced. No wonder the track completed two years later turned out to be a class-one bore.

ZIC was an attempt to bring F1 to China by a Malaysian consortium, which first put on a series of street races in the city of Zhuhai, just down the road from the then-Portuguese territory of Macau. The money wasn't there for F1, and nor was the imagination to come up with a decent track layout.

The 2.68-mile circuit is a series of slow corners and hairpins with just one fast-medium corner, the final turn that takes the cars back onto the start-finish straight. It never impressed this writer — who's had the misfortune to report on FIA GT, A1GP and the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup events at Zhuhai — and it didn't really impress the drivers.

That goes for Neel Jani, who raced an A1GP single-seater and an LMP1 prototype in the ILMC at the venue.

"It's just stop-go all the way around," says the Swiss. "In the prototype every corner was first or second gear except for the last one, and in the A1GP car we sometimes used third as well. It doesn't require much skill from the

driver, just a decent engineer to give you a good set-up on the brakes."

ZIC is still going strong 16 years after its completion. And surely still boring the Nomex longjohns off anyone who takes to its asphalt.

**Saving grace:** It stands as China's first permanent race circuit. Perhaps it didn't set a good example, but at least it never held a grand prix.

ILMC field heads into Zhuhai's T1



**AUTODROMO MIGUEL E ABED**

You'd think that if you incorporated your family name into the title of a circuit, you'd do your best to create a decent facility. Not so Carlos Abed, an FIA vice-president no less, who built the Autodromo Miguel E Abed in Mexico. The circuit proved to be a disaster the first two times the World Touring Car Championship visited the new venue near Puebla in 2005-06.

The new 2.11-mile track, which shared nothing with the circuit previously on the site in the town of Amozoc, was finished in the week leading up to the inaugural race. It was much more fundamental than putting the finishing touches to the venue; the track surface wasn't laid until the beginning of the week.

"I arrived in Mexico on the Monday and went to the track on the Tuesday, and there was no asphalt," recalls Chevrolet driver Rob Huff. "When we went back the second year, not much had changed and they were again laying the track on the Wednesday."

The first year, the surface was completed on the Thursday, the day before free practice. This involved laying a thin layer of concrete that created a dust storm behind every

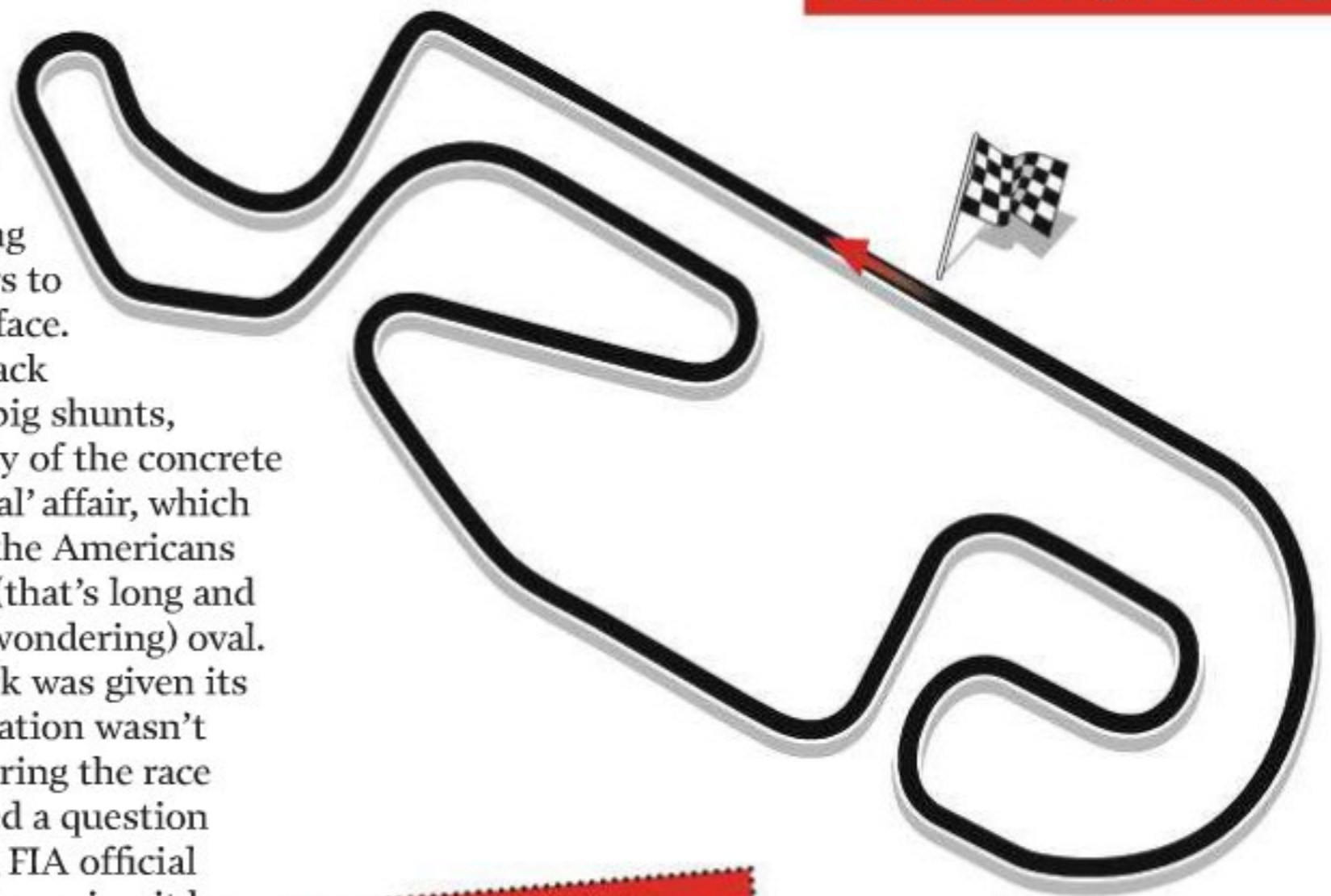
car and resulted in the bizarre sight of a grid of WTCC drivers taking to the track in road cars to try to clean up the surface.

An ultra-slippery track resulted in a series of big shunts, thanks to the proximity of the concrete walls at this weird 'roval' affair, which was built inside what the Americans would call a paperclip (that's long and thin in case you were wondering) oval.

Exactly how the track was given its Grade 2 circuit certification wasn't clear. This writer, covering the race for AUTOSPORT, asked a question of the highest-ranking FIA official at the meeting: How can a circuit be homologated before it's finished? No answer was forthcoming.

The following year, on a slightly modified and shorter layout, was more of the same. This time the new surface broke up and, partly as a result, the racing was again pretty good. After a year off the calendar, Puebla held its third and final WTCC fixture on a circuit that was finally finished.

**Saving grace:** They got there in the end. Puebla was never going to be a classic, but it did make for decent tin-top racing.



**HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN?**



WTCC drivers inspect progress

**"It doesn't require much skill"**



**ADRIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY**

A circuit that shares its name with a make of caravan had to be boring. Adria International near the Adriatic coastline is universally derided by anyone who's raced there. As one Italian driver puts it, "Everyone hates Adria".

No fewer than four hairpins, punctuated by yet more slow corners, make this twiddly 1.68-mile layout squeezed onto a grotty industrial park in the shadow of a powerstation offered little or no challenge for a driver. Which is exactly why it is so hated by everyone who's raced there, whether in the DTM, FIA GTs, Euro F3000 or whatever.

"It is a complete disaster for the driver," says our Italian friend, who wishes to remain nameless probably for the sake of his bank balance (Adria hosts a lot of corporate days, you see).

"You never get above third gear in any of the corners."

And his conclusion?

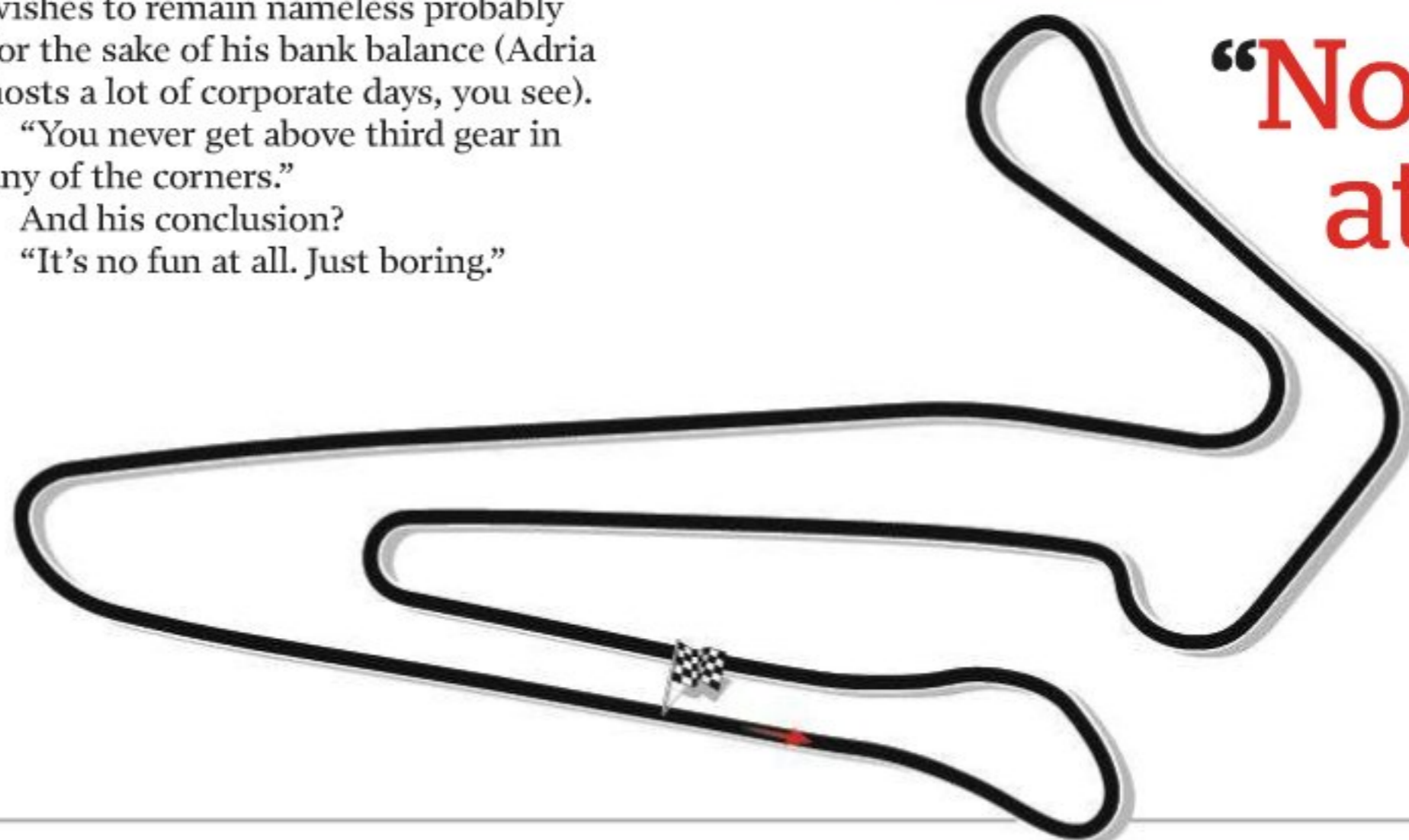
"It's no fun at all. Just boring."

**Saving grace:** The paddock is a huge 100,000sq/m air-conditioned building, while the track has thrown up some decent racing since appearing on the calendar in 2003. Back to our anonymous Italian: "It always creates good racing. Make a tiny mistake in one of those hairpins and you lose places."



"Boring" Adria not a favourite

**"No fun at all"**



### IOWA SPEEDWAY

It's only right that one of those funny American anomalies with a made-up name should make the list. There are any number of 'Rovals' — an oval with a road course section bolted on — that have been the object of the derision by drivers and fans down the years, but the Iowa Speedway surely takes the biscuit (or should that be cookie?) as the worst.

Grand-Am had the bright idea of placing its premier series on the bill of a bike racing event at the Iowa Speedway in 2007. An 7/8-mile oval, its road course layout incorporated a start-finish straight in the admittedly very wide pitlane and a short infield section packed with six corners.

The whole caboodle came to just 1.31 miles. No one who drove in either the Daytona Prototype or GT races — they separated them for this event — was particularly impressed.

"You had the oval section that was super-fast with very high g-loadings and then the infield section where you only used first and second gears," remembers Jorg Bergmeister, then racing a Porsche-engined Crawford for the Alex Job Racing DP squad. "It was like driving on a parking lot. I didn't



Grand-Am raced at Iowa in 2007

enjoy driving there — it was not what I look for in a race track."

Nor anyone else.

**Saving grace:** Charity benefitted from Grand-Am's one-off Iowa excursion. A team manager from one of the DP

teams dared to criticise in print the decision to race at such a Mickey Mouse venue on the promise of a big crowd that never materialised. He was fined for "actions inappropriate for the sport", with the \$1000 going to the Boggy Creek Camp children's charity.



**"Like driving on a parking lot"**

**A1-RING**

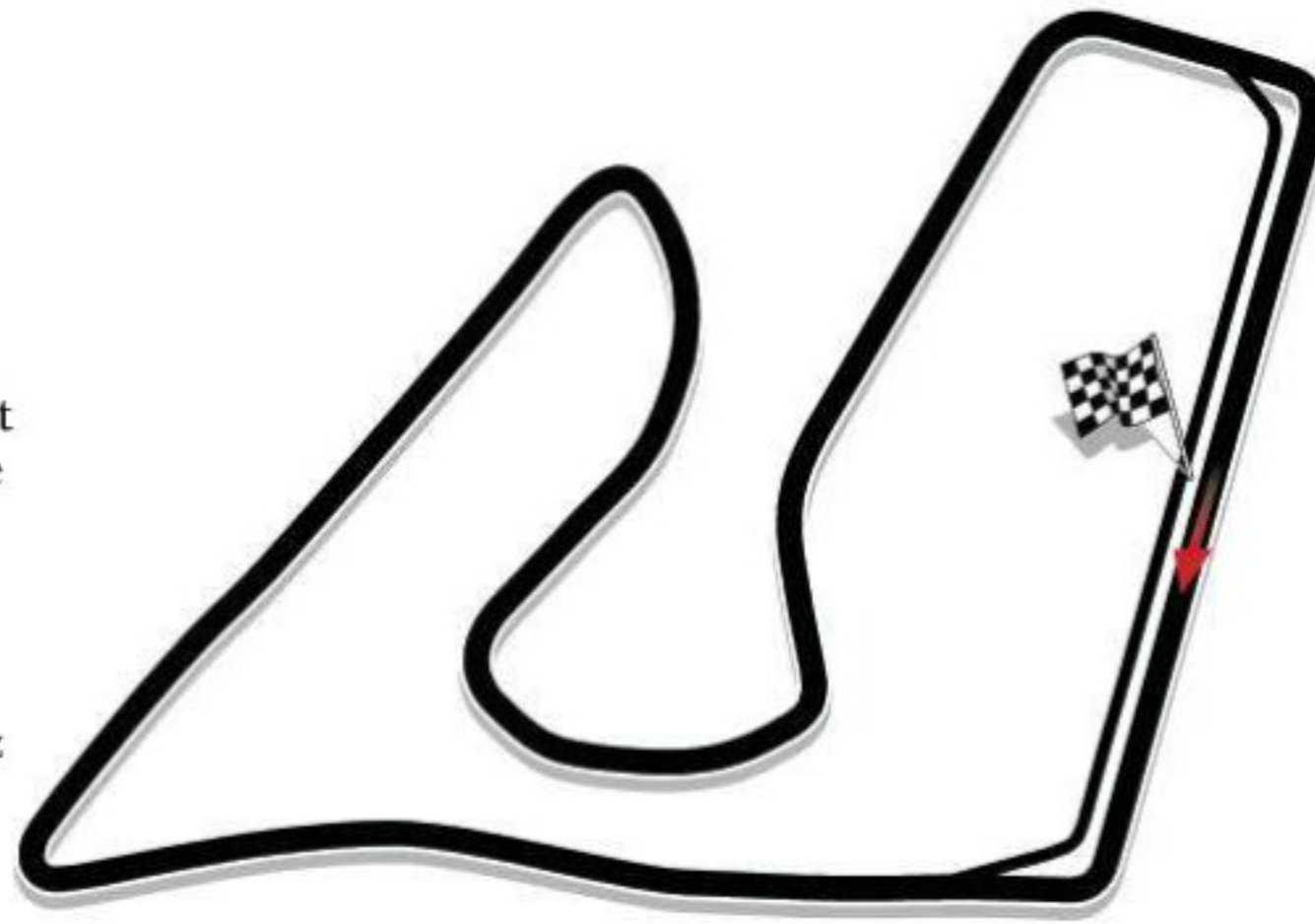
Is the A1-Ring, or the Red Bull Ring as it's called these days, such a bad racing circuit? It is if you compare it with the track on the same site that it replaced. And we're talking about the majestic Osterreichring.

Just think of all the great corners that were butchered or lost when the bulldozers moved in, directed by Hermann Tilke. The old banked Glatz Kurve or Sebring Auspuffkurve was bypassed – though thankfully left intact – and the ultra-fast Bosch Curve was replaced by a hairpin. Austrian sportscar stalwart Franz Konrad is unequivocal about what happened to his country's premier race circuit in time for the 1997 season.

"The old track was amazing and the new one is shit," he says. "There are a couple of good corners in the middle [known today as Audi ultra and Lauda], but the rest of it is boring."

Touring car and sportscar legend Klaus Ludwig has a similar view. "It's the same old shit," he says. "The A1-Ring is just like Hockenheim. That man – what's his name? – takes a good circuit and makes it worse."

To be fair to Tilke, then working on his first F1 project, the old track was too long for F1 at 3.67 miles. That required a sharp right at the old Hella Licht chicane to bypass the section of track behind the hill.



DTM raced at Red Bull Ring in 2012

But if you ever visited the old track and haven't seen the new 2.68-mile layout, here's some advice: stay away and keep your memories intact.

**Saving grace:** The seven Austrian GPs held on the A1-Ring from 1997 to 2003 threw up some pretty interesting racing and maybe the place will do so once again. And perhaps that was the point.

**FAIR PARK - DALLAS**

Trying to pick the worst venue from the list of short-lived attempts to take F1 onto the streets of the USA in the 1980s is like asking "who's the shortest dwarf", according to Eddie Cheever, who raced at them all: Las Vegas, Detroit, Dallas and Phoenix. The American points to Dallas as the nadir of the US F1 adventure.

"All those circuits had a charm and each had a commercial reason behind them," says Cheever, who was racing for Alfa Romeo when F1 made its one and only visit to the 2.43-mile Fair Park circuit. "I didn't like Vegas and I didn't like Dallas. The layout wasn't very good and I didn't like the heat."

The Fair Park circuit wasn't popular with the F1 brigade when it pitched up. The track was bumpy, the surface started to break up as early as Friday and there were question marks over its safety. Witness Tyrrell driver Martin Brundle's ankle-breaking accident. There was even talk of a boycott by the drivers.

Yet the over-riding memory of anyone who raced in the one-off Dallas Grand Prix was the heat. Ambient temperatures were over 40C which, combined with a surface that had taken a pummeling by the Can-Am cars in the Saturday support race,



**"Who is the shortest dwarf?"**



Fair Park circuit broke up in heat

turned round nine of the '84 F1 World Championship into a race of attrition.

"What possessed F1 to go to Dallas in July I don't know," admits Cheever. "Only a foreigner would choose that date."

**Saving grace:** The high retirement rate allowed Piercarlo Ghinzani, everyone's second-favourite F1 driver, to score the only points of his F1 career. Praise be!

**BETTER THAN YOU THOUGHT**

**CAESAR'S PALACE**

This time we're talking about the road course in Las Vegas, scene of two grands prix in 1981 and '82. Designed by a team led by F1 official starter Derek Ongaro, it was no street circuit, rather a proper track that just happened to be built in the middle of the city. Danny Sullivan, who won the Can-Am race on the F1 undercard in '81, was a big fan of the 2.27-mile track and remembers a thrilling battle with Al Unser Jr that went down to the wire. "I think Little Al and I passed each other four times on that final lap," he recalls. "It was a fabulous track: the layout was good, it was wide and there were plenty of passing zones." So that's told you.

**WUNSTORF**

Wunstorf was one of those funny breed of German airfield circuits that proliferated before the country got a new clutch of permanent venues in the 1990s. Don't think it was Mickey Mouse, though. Karl Wendlinger, who raced at the track near Hanover in both Formula 3 and touring cars, liked the place and reckoned it was a real challenge. "It was definitely quick," says the Austrian. "There were two flat-in-fifth left-handers when you were doing it clockwise." Hang on a minute, clockwise? "Yes, I did it clockwise in F3 in the 1980s and anti-clockwise in touring cars in the 1990s."

**BURKE LAKEFRONT AIRPORT - CLEVELAND**

The Cleveland airport venue, which hosted CART/Champ Car races from 1982 to the demise of the series in 2007, looked for all the world like a giant North Weald sprint course, but our man Sullivan won't have any criticism of a track on which he won four times. "Because it was so wide and had big braking zones, it made for great racing," he says of the track variously measured between 2.11 and 2.37 miles. "It was rougher than shit because you crossed runways, but it was a fabulous track where the fans could see every corner."

**THINK WE'VE MISSED ANY? Let us know on our facebook page**



# FESTIVE FEVER 2012

Win 2013 British Grand Prix tickets in *HENRY HOPE-FROST's* annual Christmas quiz

## A 2012 and all that

How much can you remember about the season past?

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b><br/>How many teams won races in Formula Nippon?<br/>.....</p>   | <p>World Touring Car Championship?<br/>.....</p>  | <p>score a fastest lap in British Formula Ford?<br/>.....</p>  |
| <p><b>2</b><br/>Name the two drivers who scored just a single point in Formula Renault 3.5.<br/>.....</p>                   | <p><b>5</b><br/>Name all the NASCAR Sprint Cup drivers who took a pole position but didn't win a race.<br/>.....</p>                | <p><b>8</b><br/>Who was the highest-placed British driver in the Intercontinental Rally Challenge?<br/>.....</p>       |
| <p><b>3</b><br/>Name all the Norwegian drivers who scored at least one point in the World Rally Championship.<br/>.....</p> | <p><b>6</b><br/>Who was the highest-placed driver in the final Auto GP championship standings who did not win a race?<br/>.....</p> | <p><b>9</b><br/>What was the best overall race finish for a GTE car in the World Endurance Championship?<br/>.....</p> |
| <p><b>4</b><br/>How many manufacturers were represented in the</p>  | <p><b>7</b><br/>Who was the only non-winner and non-polesitter to</p>   | <p><b>10</b><br/>Name all the winners of British Formula 3 National Class races.<br/>.....</p>                         |

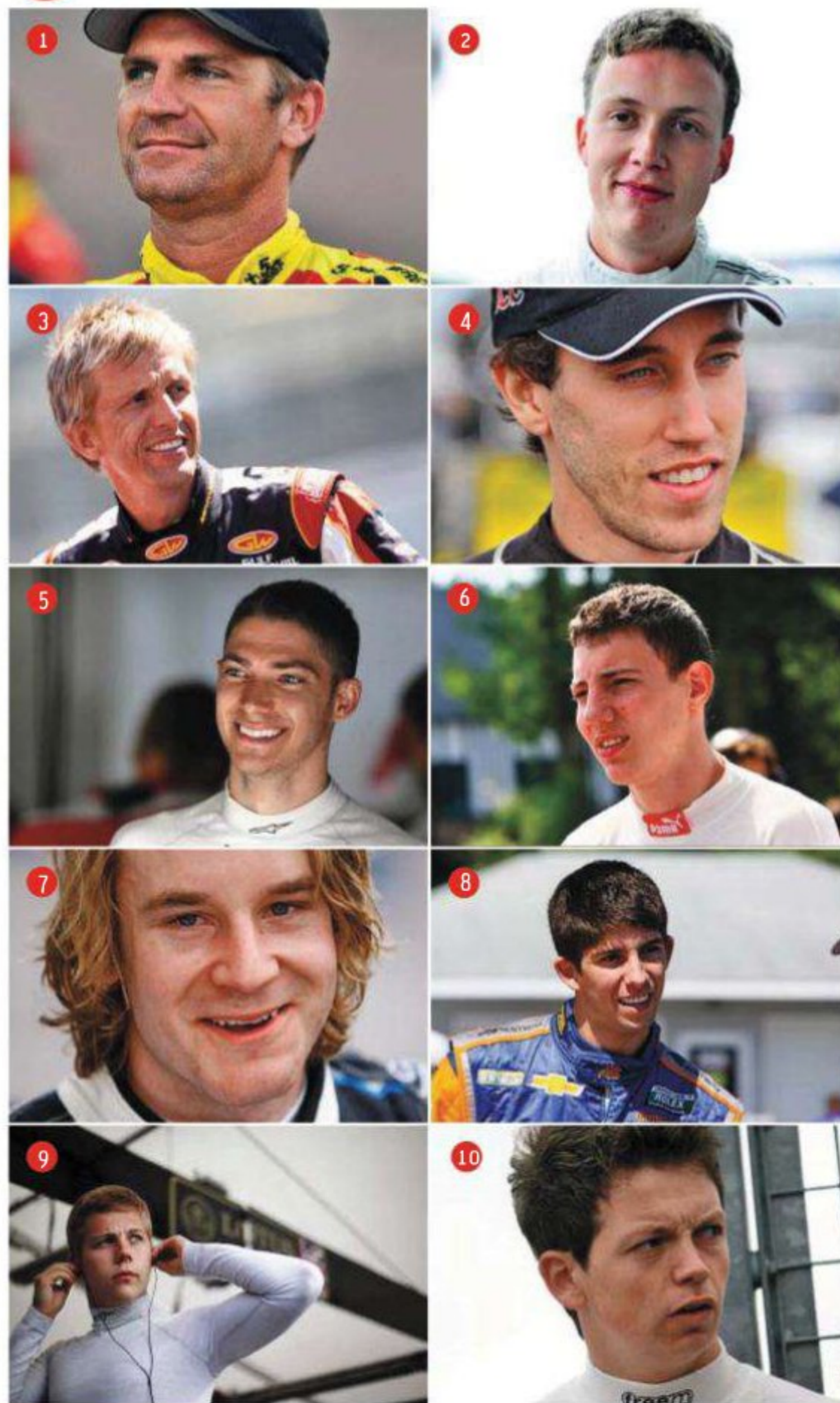
## B Missing link

Spot a theme from motorsport history and fill in the blanks

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1</b> R Goransson, -----, M Nykjaer, J Thompson, F Giovanardi, F Monje.</p>                                       | <p><b>6</b> B Redman, V Elford, J Hine, J Burton, D Bell, -----, C Craft, G Edwards, M Raymond.</p>                       |
| <p><b>2</b> H Pescarolo, M Thackwell, M Baldi, J Mass, J-L Schlesser, -----, K Acheson, K Wendlinger, M Schumacher.</p> | <p><b>7</b> A Priaulx, J Plato, B Wilson, D Eaves, N Hart, D Shaw, -----, J Westwood, J Hunter, D Henderson, S Lakin.</p> |
| <p><b>3</b> T Lund, F Lorenzen, -----, L Yarbrough, B Allison, B Elliott, D Allison, D Jarrett, M Kenseth, T Bayne.</p> | <p><b>8</b> C Sainz, J Kankkunen, D Auriol, B Waldegaard, -----, H Mikkola, I Duncan, W Boyce, A Schwarz.</p>             |
| <p><b>4</b> D Manning, N Karthikeyan, -----, O Pla, R Antinucci.</p>  | <p><b>9</b> P Carpentier, S Goodyear, G Moore, A Tagliani, P Tracy, -----, J Villeneuve Jr.</p>                           |
| <p><b>5</b> B Binnie, J-D Deletraz, T Erdos, T Kimber-Smith, -----, C Pillon.</p>                                       | <p><b>10</b> M Thackwell, J Nielsen, P Martini, -----, M Gugelmin, R Moreno, J-M Gounon.</p>                              |

## D Winners' gallery

Who are these 2012 international race and/or rally winners?



## C Family ties

Can you identify these guys – all of whom have well-known surnames?



# CHRISTMAS QUIZ WIN BRITISH GP TICKETS



Courtesy of Silverstone Circuit, our winner will receive two three-day passes to the 2013 British GP. For more info log on to [www.silverstone.co.uk](http://www.silverstone.co.uk) or phone 0844 3750 740.

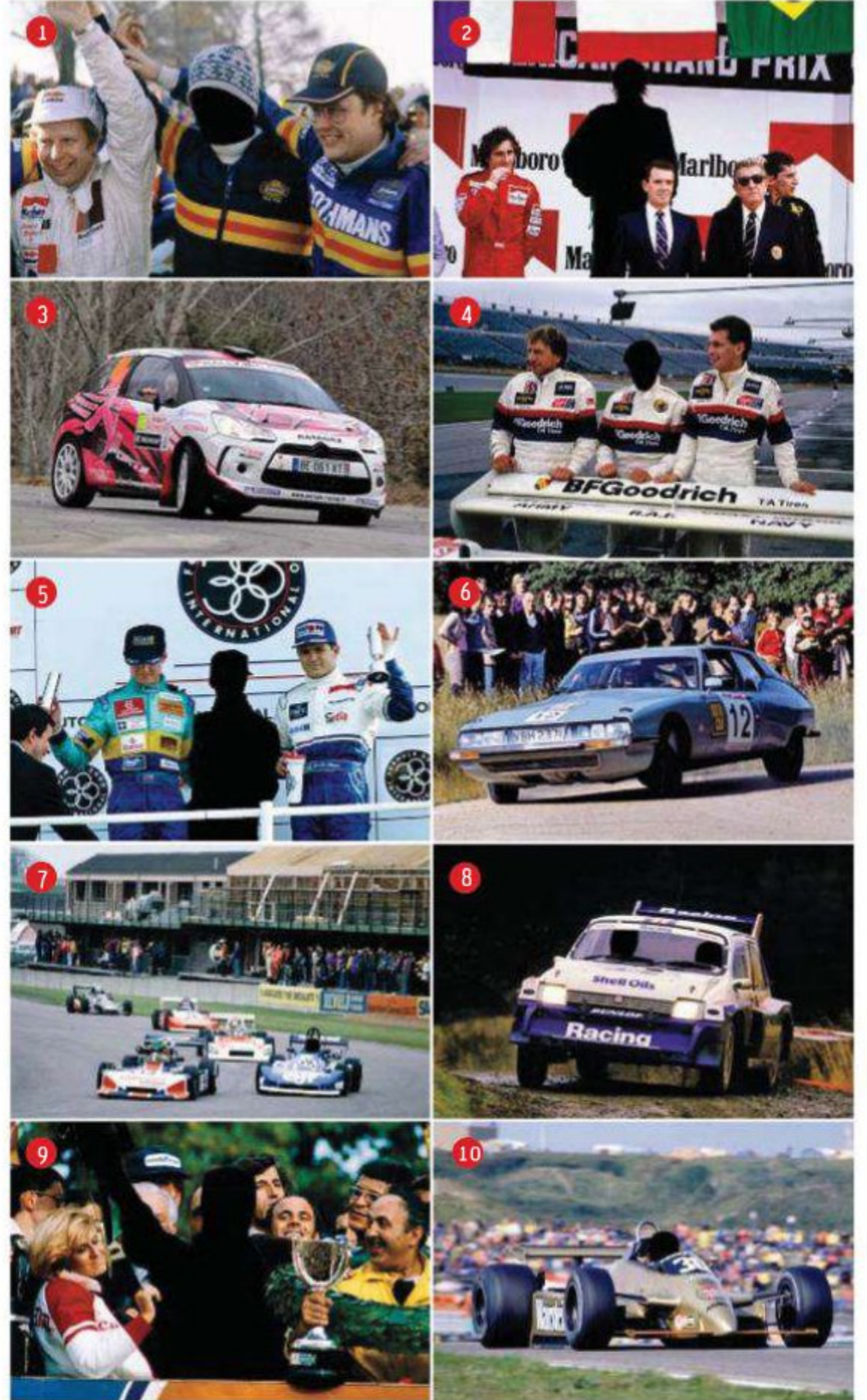
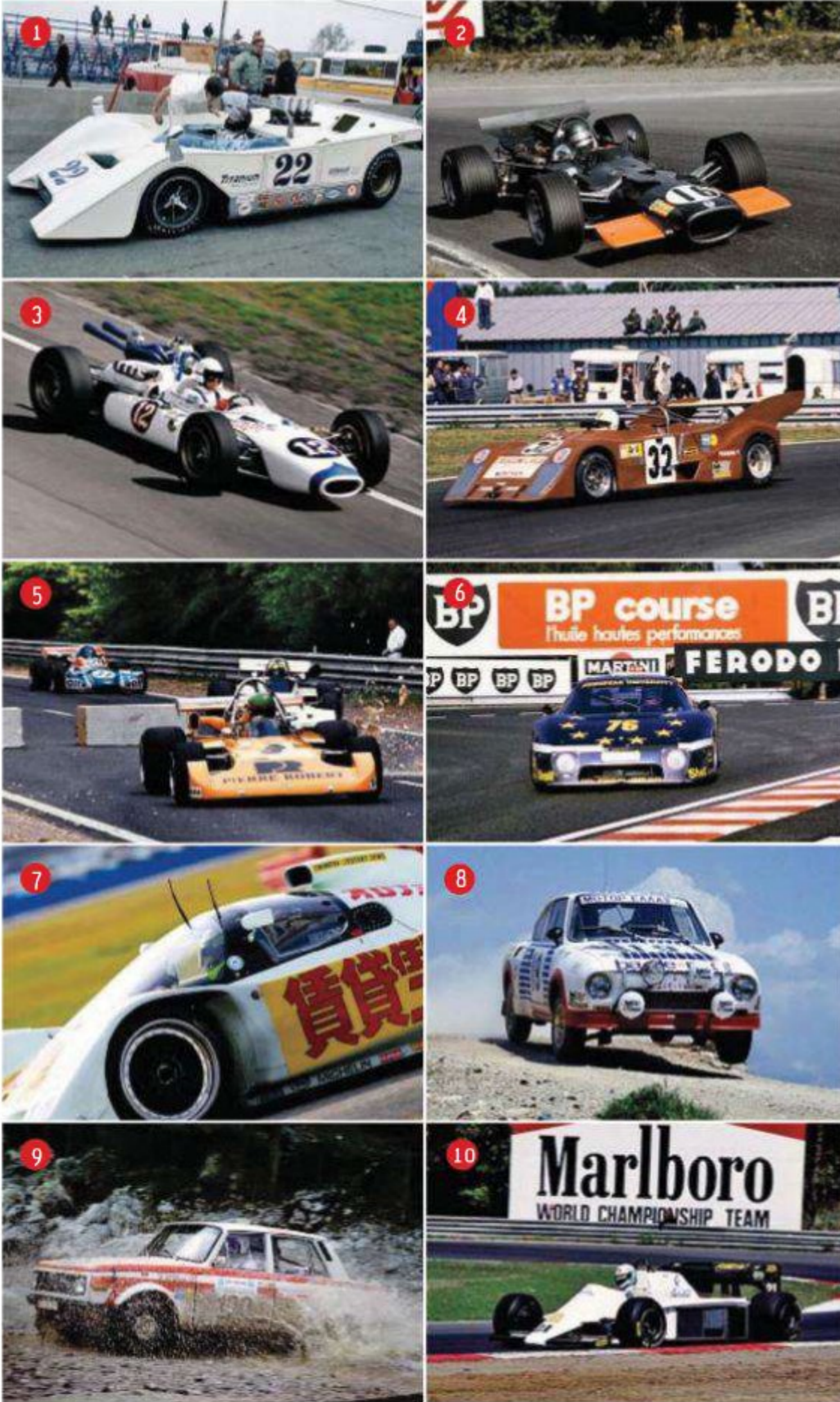


Five runners-up will receive copies of the official 2012 Le Mans, BTCC and BRC reviews courtesy of Duke. For more info check out [www.dukevideo.co.uk](http://www.dukevideo.co.uk)



**E Who, what, where, when?** We want drivers, cars, series, venues, dates – and what they had for breakfast that day. The more you know, the better you'll do!

**F Drawn a blank** Whose face and/or name have we deliberately covered up in these pics? And, if you can summon the energy, what are they doing and when?



Send your answers to the 60 questions, clearly numbered by section, on a separate sheet of paper to the address on the right by Friday January 11, 2013

Remember: in the event of a tie-break an answer deemed to be the most detailed will be adjudged the winner.

Your details – must be completed  
(Block capitals please)

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Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Fastest laps in British Isles

Your rundown of who set the pace in 2012. Compiled by *MARCUS SIMMONS*

**T**his is the table that gives you the fastest lap set in a race on each of the circuits used for racing in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland throughout the season. And it seems to get bigger every year – 31 layouts were used in 2012; there was no racing this season on the Oulton Park Fosters track, but Bishopscourt and the ‘wrong-way-round’ Knockhill were added.

The demise of Formula Renault UK for 2012 meant the older-spec Renault BARC cars got a look-in, with Scott Malvern taking two best laps. Over in Ireland, the similar Tatuus of Martin Daly took a brace in Libre racing, while Formula Jedi maestro Richard Mitcham is the other with a pair. The MSV F3 Cup is also spreading its influence, with three 2012 ‘records’: the long Anglesey, Mallory and Silverstone National.

But it’s the Silverstone GP track that gave us the quickest lap. And yes, Kimi Raikkonen knew what he was doing!



## PHILIP SHIELDS Kirkistown

“We had a Formula Master car I’d been racing. We’d been dealing with iSport and knew they had two GP2 cars coming up for sale and thought, ‘That looks a good idea’, so we bought them.

“We know Adam Carroll so we brought him over to set the cars up. He’s been a big help. Then before I got the outright record we brought Richard Lyons over for more set-up and some coaching.

“The first corner – Debtors Dip – I got through at just under 180mph! It’s a bumpy circuit and you know that if you go off there you don’t know where you’ll end up...

“That was a 51.1s although I’ve



Shields had help from Carroll and Lyons

done a 49.8s in testing. Richard has done a 47.3s, so my ultimate goal next year is to take the car out and do a 48s lap in a race.

“I’ve worked hard at this, building up experience in club racing. The GP2s have been a work in progress; they keep you focused!”



## NIGEL GREENSALL Anglesey Coastal

“Ian Cummings owns the Speads and had hired me to coach him. His chief mechanic is Tony Frost, who I worked with when I raced Tyrrells in BOSS. Ian couldn’t do the Anglesey Bike Sports round so I drove overnight from a Fun Cup race at Brands on the Saturday and went straight out to qualify.

“The Speads is a beautiful little car. All we needed was a small change of tyre pressures and I put it on pole.

“I was down on top speed and on the first lap Tim Gray, James Breakell and Adrian Reynard went steaming past. From there it was a really frantic race and I had to use an unusual line through the Corkscrew to get by them – it worked perfectly in the Speads.

“By race two Tim knew what I was up to, but it was a great dice and the races were a great advert for the series.”



Greensall leads Reynard's Inverter



## BRENDON HARTLEY Donington Park GP



Hartley was fully on it around Donington

“This year opened my eyes to how quick an LMP2 car is. I didn’t realise how much downforce and grip they had. To be faster than a Formula 3 car around Donington proves that, because it’s not as if a P2 has lots of power. I’d compare it to a Formula Renault 3.5.

“That makes it a lot of fun around Donington Park, which has always been one of my favourite circuits. The Craner Curves are flat and then it’s a light brake and down a gear for the Old Hairpin, my favourite corner along with McLeans and Coppice.

That’s a great sequence.

“We had the car pretty hooked up at the Donington ELMS race, just like we did throughout the season with the exception of the Silverstone WEC. The car felt good, but I was probably ragging it more than I should have been.”

PICS: EBREY, STALEY, WOOD/LAT, OLIVER READ, ROY DEMPSTER, STEVE JONES

TRACK / DRIVER	CAR	TIME	SPEED	DATE
<b>ANGLESEY COASTAL</b>				
Nigel Greensall	Speads-Yamaha RS06D	1m04.99s	85.86mph	August 5
<b>ANGLESEY INTERNATIONAL</b>				
Sean Walkinshaw	Dallara-Mugen F302	1m21.287s	93.00mph	September 8
<b>BISHOPSCOURT</b>				
Martin Daly	Tatuus-Renault RCOO	1m09.408s	94.606mph	May 12
<b>BRANDS HATCH GRAND PRIX</b>				
Christopher Zanella	Williams-Audi JPH1B	1m15.828s	115.52mph	July 15
<b>BRANDS HATCH INDY</b>				
Raffaele Marciello	Dallara-Mercedes F312	41.202s	105.54mph	May 19
<b>CADWELL PARK</b>				
Richard Mitcham	Jedi-Suzuki Mk6	1m23.286s	93.927mph	June 2
<b>CASTLE COMBE</b>				
Simon Tilling	Radical-RPE SR3 RS	1m02.937s	105.82mph	June 16
<b>CROFT</b>				
Andrew Smith	March-Ford BDG 742	1m18.369s	97.70mph	August 4
<b>DONINGTON PARK GRAND PRIX</b>				
Brendon Hartley	ORECA-Nissan O3	1m21.336s	110.09mph	July 15
<b>DONINGTON PARK NATIONAL</b>				
Bob Berridge	Lancia-Ferrari LC2	1m02.304s	114.34mph	May 6
<b>GOODWOOD</b>				
Gary Pearson	Lola-Chevrolet T70 Spyder	1m19.703s	108.40mph	September 15
<b>KIRKISTOWN</b>				
Philip Shields	Dallara-Mecachrome GP2/05	51.105s	106.507mph	October 6
<b>KNOCKHILL</b>				
Ben Barker	Porsche 911 GT3 Cup	50.675s	90.31mph	August 26
<b>KNOCKHILL ANTI-CLOCKWISE</b>				
Gary Wait	Ford Escort Cosworth	1m01.728s	74.650mph	October 28
<b>LYDDEN HILL</b>				
Mark Burton	Jade-Vauxhall Trackstar	39.785s	90.48mph	April 14
<b>MALLORY PARK</b>				
Richard Purcell	Dallara-Toyota F301	43.268s	112.32mph	June 4
<b>MONDELLO PARK LONG</b>				
Stephen Daly	Reynard- Holden 92D	1m40.562s	77.92mph	September 15
<b>MONDELLO PARK SHORT</b>				
Eamon Matheson	Mission-Hayabusa T5	53.129s	77.89mph	April 15
<b>OULTON PARK</b>				
Felix Serralles	Dallara-Mercedes F312	1m28.902s	109.01mph	April 7
<b>OULTON PARK ISLAND</b>				
Jonas Gelzinis	Porsche 911 GT3 Cup	1m24.141s	95.24mph	June 10
<b>PEMBREY</b>				
Ray Mallock	Mallock U2-Ford Mk18B	56.339s	93.03mph	August 4
<b>PHOENIX PARK</b>				
Martin Daly	Tatuus-Renault RCOO	1m09.153s	90.07mph	August 19
<b>ROCKINGHAM INTERNATIONAL</b>				
Scott Malvern	Tatuus-Renault RCOO	1m18.015s	89.52mph	May 20
<b>ROCKINGHAM INTERNATIONAL LONG</b>				
Jack Harvey	Dallara-Volkswagen F312	1m18.627s	93.94mph	June 10
<b>ROCKINGHAM OVAL</b>				
Paul Poulter	SHP Pickup-Vauxhall	40.001s	133.09mph	May 20
<b>SILVERSTONE GRAND PRIX</b>				
Kimi Raikkonen	Lotus-Renault E20	1m34.661s	139.21mph	July 8
<b>SILVERSTONE HISTORIC GP</b>				
Gareth Evans	Sauber-Mercedes C9	1m52.483s	116.78mph	July 22
<b>SILVERSTONE NATIONAL</b>				
Louis Hamilton-Smith	Dallara-Renault F304	53.314s	110.35mph	May 13
<b>SNETTERTON 300</b>				
Jazeman Jaafar	Dallara-Volkswagen F312	1m42.426s	104.35mph	August 5
<b>SNETTERTON 200</b>				
Richard Mitcham	Jedi-Suzuki Mk6	1m10.135s	101.83mph	July 22
<b>THRUXTON</b>				
Scott Malvern	Tatuus-Renault RCOO	1m13.586s	115.26mph	June 17



**JACK HARVEY**  
**Rockingham**  
**International Long**

"It's difficult to know why I was so quick at Rockingham. When you look back, in that race 17 of my laps were better than anyone else's. The car was exactly how I wanted and that allowed me to drive at a higher level.

"It's a very challenging circuit, especially with the extra bit where you go to the right at Pif-Paf instead of the left. It's really technical, which means that it's not usually an easy track to be much faster than everyone else as you can be at, say, Brands GP. It's usually very close there but we dominated by quite a bit.

"I was pulling away by seven or eight tenths a lap, but I didn't feel I was driving that hard. Once the team told me the gap I was able to relax a bit."



Harvey: unsure where the speed came from



**RAY MALLOCK**  
**Pembrey**

"Clubmans is a very important part of the Mallock heritage. They're fabulous cars to drive and at Pembrey you really appreciate the grip, balance and poise. My Mk18 is from 1976 - I was involved in building that generation of cars with my brother and father.

"I stripped the crown wheel and pinion in qualifying and the only other diff I had was a 4.5 ratio instead of the 4.2. That meant it would be revving like hell on the straight so we put it on full-wet setting, with high wing and gurney flap. Now it was absolutely nailed in the fast corners and I could take the hairpin in second instead of first! I caught John Harrison hand over fist and when I saw a gap I slipped up the inside.

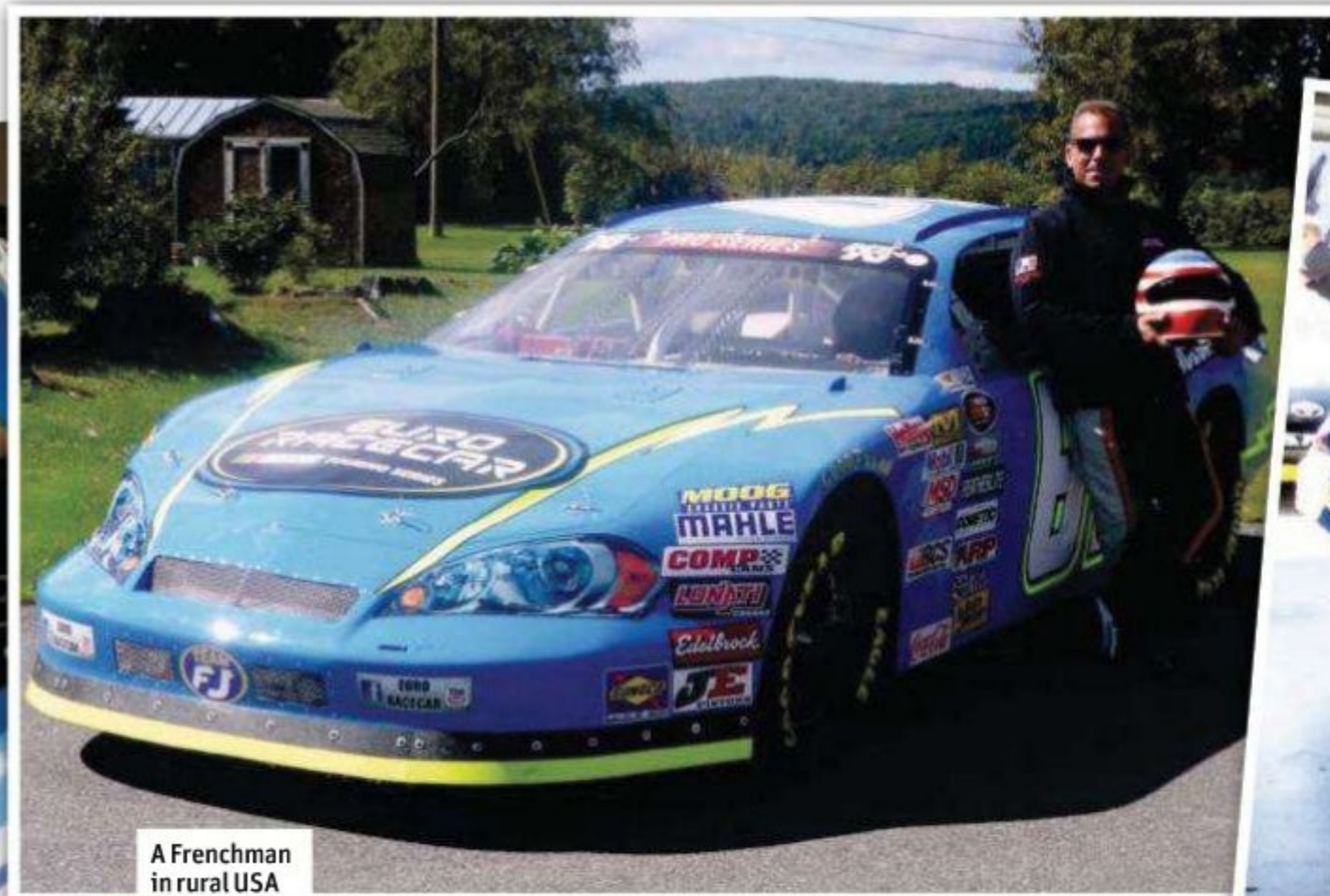
"I'd never raced at Pembrey, but I spent so many days there at BTCC tests, poring over data with engineers, I felt I knew it intimately."



Mallock found demon tweak for Welsh event



Helary was looking forward to NASCAR run



A Frenchman in rural USA

# Why NASCAR is much harder than it looks

And that's according to a Le Mans 24 Hours winner. *SAM TREMAYNE* went along to find out why

**T**here haven't been many AUTOSPORT features over the years on somebody not qualifying for a race, but in life there are always exceptions.

"I did everything wrong," admits Eric Helary. "I wasn't afraid; not at all. But I was a passenger, not a driver. I was pushing hard – twice I nearly crashed – but making the race wasn't possible, we have to accept this."

It's not how I wanted to finish."

When a driver is candid enough to admit they simply lacked speed, it follows that their ability falls into question. But when that driver is a Le Mans 24 Hours winner (with a total of four podiums at the Circuit de la Sarthe), when he has also triumphed in the Spa 24 Hours and competed with distinction in the DTM, to say nothing of myriad other series, the answer

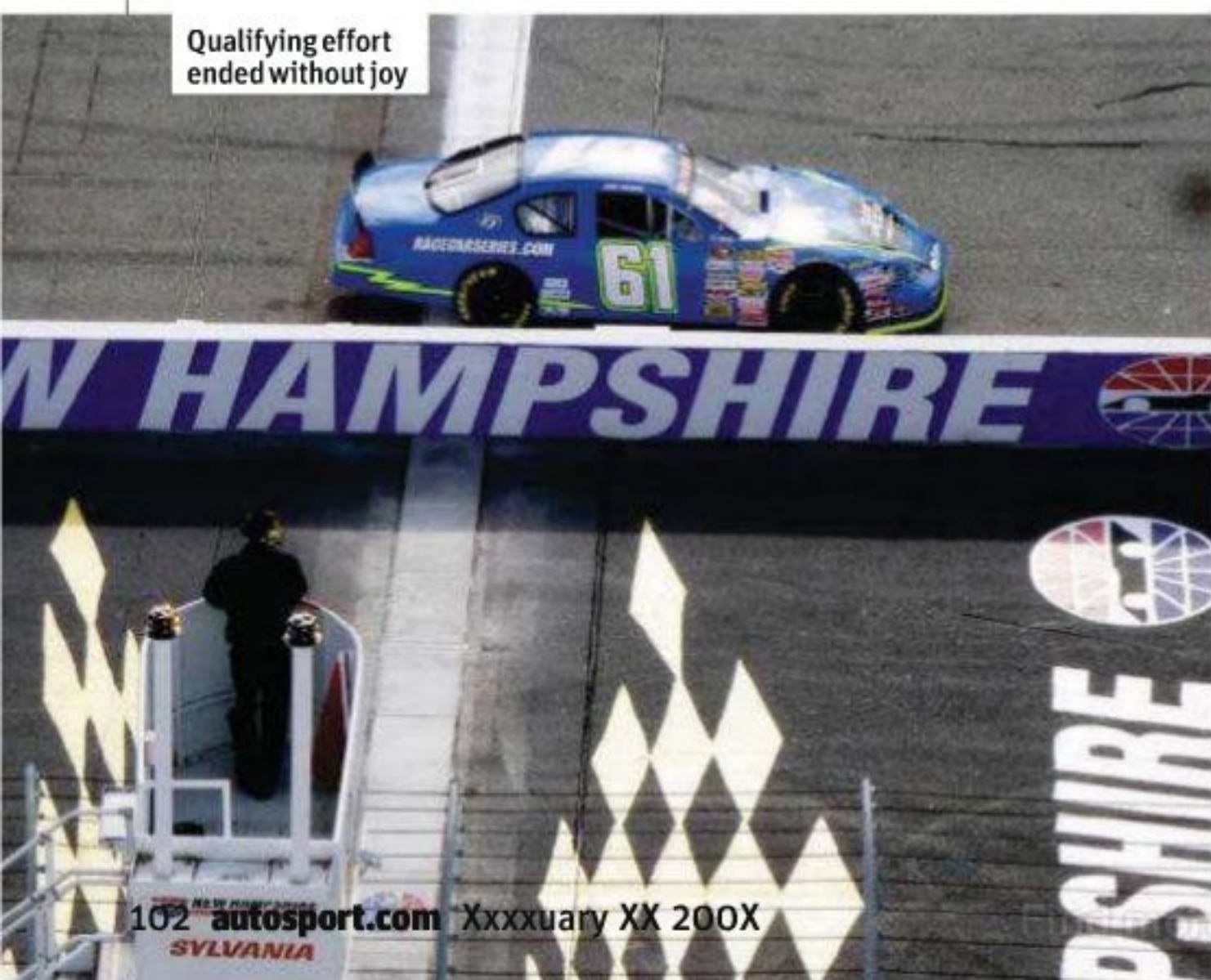
is emphatic: Helary is no slouch.

Nor has age dimmed his talents: in 2011 he stormed to the Euro Racecar championship, racking up five wins, six poles and nine top-five finishes from 12 races. His prize? A shot at qualifying for the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East race at New Hampshire Motor Speedway.

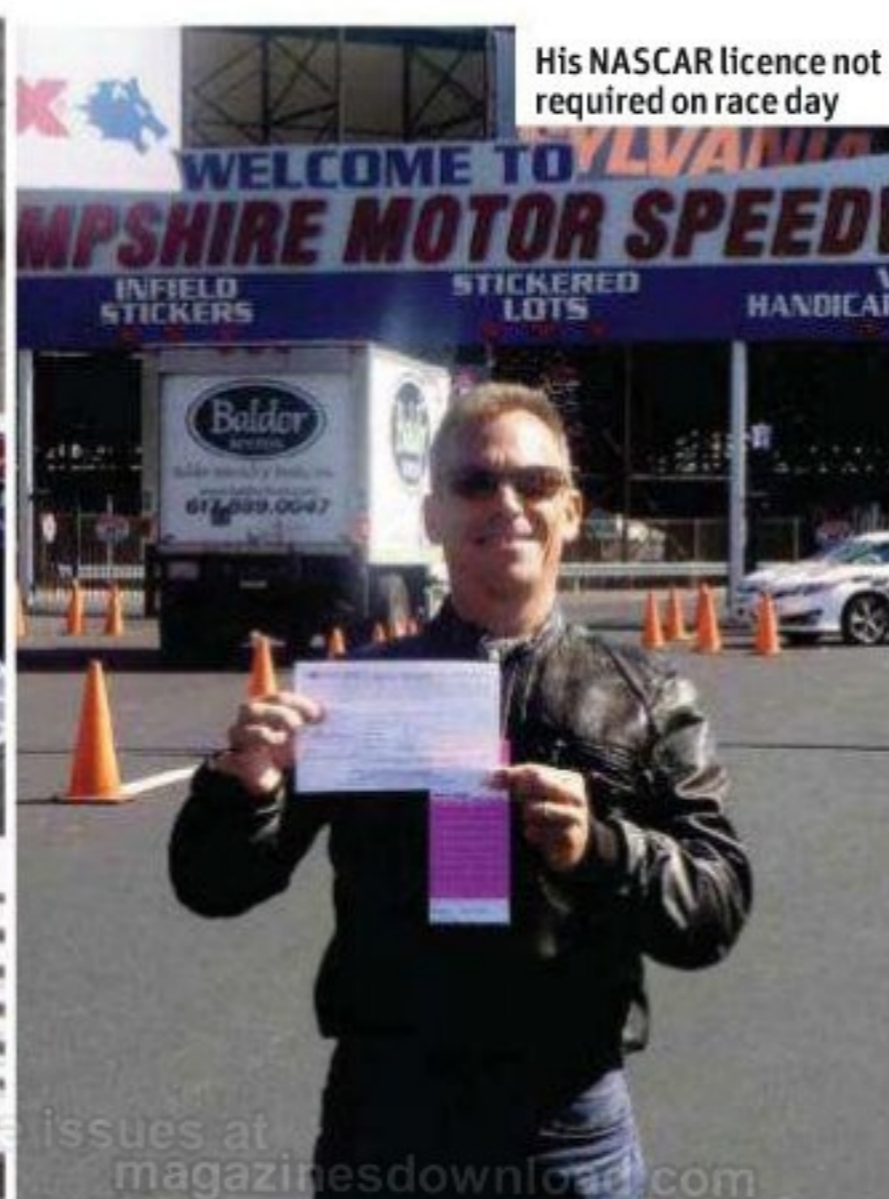
Given his CV, it's not the toughest challenge Helary has faced. A 40-strong entry was to be trimmed to 32 after qualifying. Ostensibly, there wasn't even much track to learn: just one mile of asphalt, and four left-hand bends. But such lazy generalisations are way wide of the mark: NASCAR always has been tougher than it looks.

For starters, every oval has its own individual qualities, from the larger superspeedways such as Talladega down to the Bristol-style half-milers. Flat and fast, New Hampshire is, according to the weekend's runaway Sprint Cup winner Denny Hamlin, "so line-sensitive, you really have to hit the right marks to be fast."

It also requires absolute commitment and confidence – or what Brett Moffitt, eight-time K&N



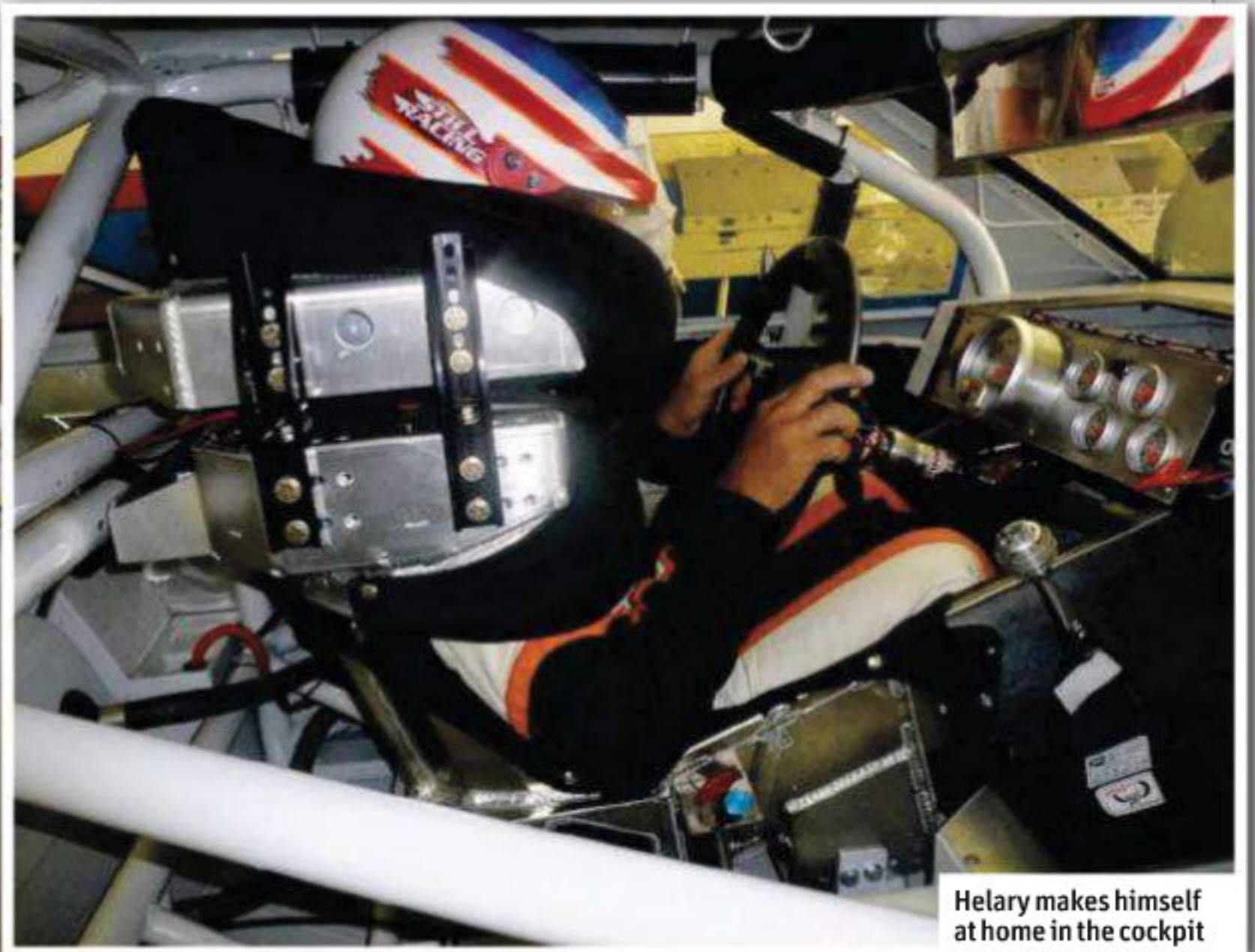
Qualifying effort ended without joy



His NASCAR licence not required on race day



His Toyota at scrutineering



Helary makes himself at home in the cockpit

polesitter and 2011 winner at New Hampshire – terms “being right on the edge of out of control. Your car needs to be right on, so for someone new it’s definitely tricky.”

Being a relative rookie to ovals is not the only obstacle facing Helary. With K&N on the Sprint Cup undercard, the typical format of two one-hour practice sessions has been replaced with a solitary 90-minute session. After that is the qualifying draw, where going last is a massive boon.

Helary is certainly not underestimating the challenge, but his approach is one of enthusiasm rather than trepidation. “It’s really different – massively so,” he explains. “You have to unlearn some things, and take on others: trail braking, corner approaches, set-up. And that’s just for practice. In qualifying your car is different again, with more downforce, more oversteer, new tyres.”

Helary does at least have help, in the form of his crew in the FJ team, formerly known as Fadden Racing. It’s a vastly experienced K&N squad for which former driver and then owner Mike Olson won two titles. And initially at least there are encouraging signs, with Helary 31st – right on the cusp of the cut-off – after the opening 15 minutes of practice.

But following that opening 10-lap stint, he won’t come round again for another 45 minutes, as a fuel pick-up issue deals his programme, and his weekend, a massive blow. Eventually he reappears to bang in 26 laps, but it’s done without structure, without feedback.

“We were supposed to make a simulation, but it wasn’t our day,” he admits. “It’s a shame because qualifying is so different to practice. We just have to hope for a good draw – if I start last, at least I have a chance to see where others are braking and turning.”

The hope proves forlorn, as Helary is drawn fourth. “Shit luck,” he sums up. It is not the last time this lament will be voiced.

Qualifying in NASCAR really is different, from the bigger wings to the fresh rubber and the ample application of tape to seal off every last hole – cooling, after all, is not so paramount over a simple two-lap run. The disadvantage of running early has already been brought home by an early spinner when Helary heads out, and his best average speed is slower than he manages in practice. It’s always going to be tight from there...

In the end, even his practice best would not be enough. As the track improves, only one other driver goes slower, leaving Helary 38th overall, six spots off the cut.

Perhaps because he has already achieved so much in his career, Helary is refreshingly candid. “I would have loved to have raced here, but it wasn’t to be,” he says. “The competition was so high because this is on the Sprint Cup bill, and we lost some crucial time in practice.

“I had some dreams when I was young – firstly to do one car race, and I have done maybe 200; then to do Le Mans, and I won it. I wanted to do an oval race, so I joined. I almost did it, but not quite, not yet...”

## HOW EURO RACECAR FITS INTO NASCAR

Launched in 2008 by Jerome Galpin, the Euro Racecar series was initially wholly independent from the NASCAR fraternity, even if much of the concept, rules and spirit were derived from the American racing community.

After initial contact in early 2009 – which included discussions on the Euro Racecar champion entering a NASCAR-sanctioned race – the relationship has grown, and the series has now been incorporated into the fifth tier of the NASCAR umbrella, positioned directly below the K&N East and West series.

“We were very respectful at the start,” Galpin explains. “I fell in love with NASCAR’s spirit, but when we launched the series we never used NASCAR’s name and we never tried to copy them. That helped us build a good relationship from the start.

“I never wanted the name, I just wanted a close working relationship where we can build a strong series together in time, and that was the same for NASCAR.

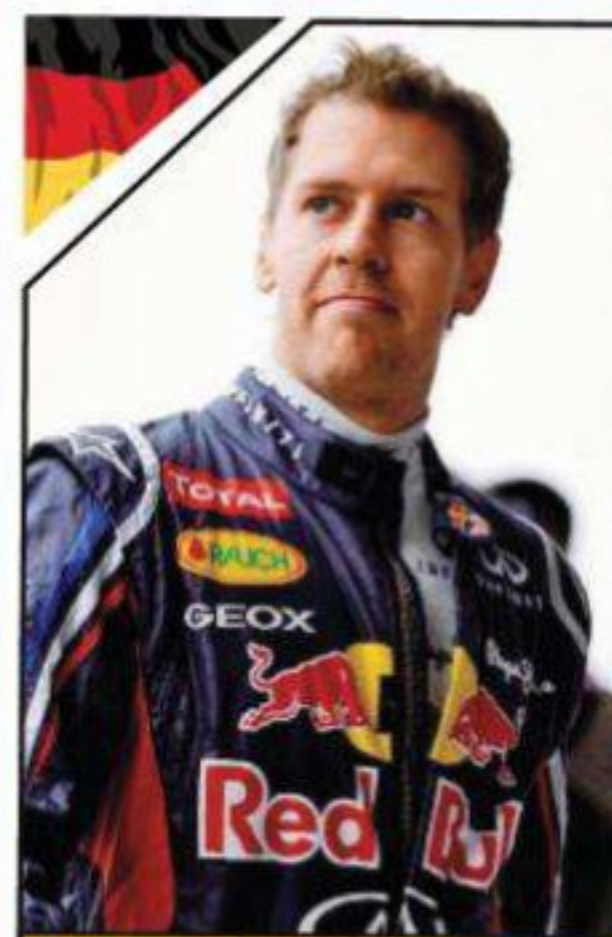
“As we’ve improved the car, and grown as a series, our relationship has matured. We have our own team now to run our champions, and next year our champion will receive a scholarship to help them compete in K&N in 2014. The goal, for us and NASCAR, is now to develop a big European series.”



‘NASCAR’ European style, at France’s Tours Speedway

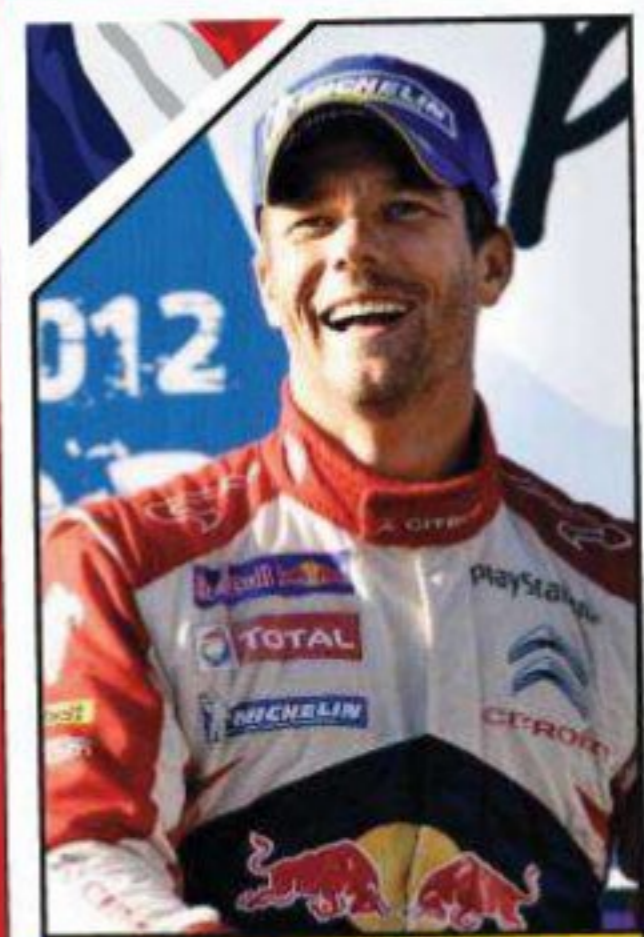
# 2012 CHAMPS' GALLERY

AUTOSPORT salutes the 54  
championship-winning drivers of  
this year's major international series



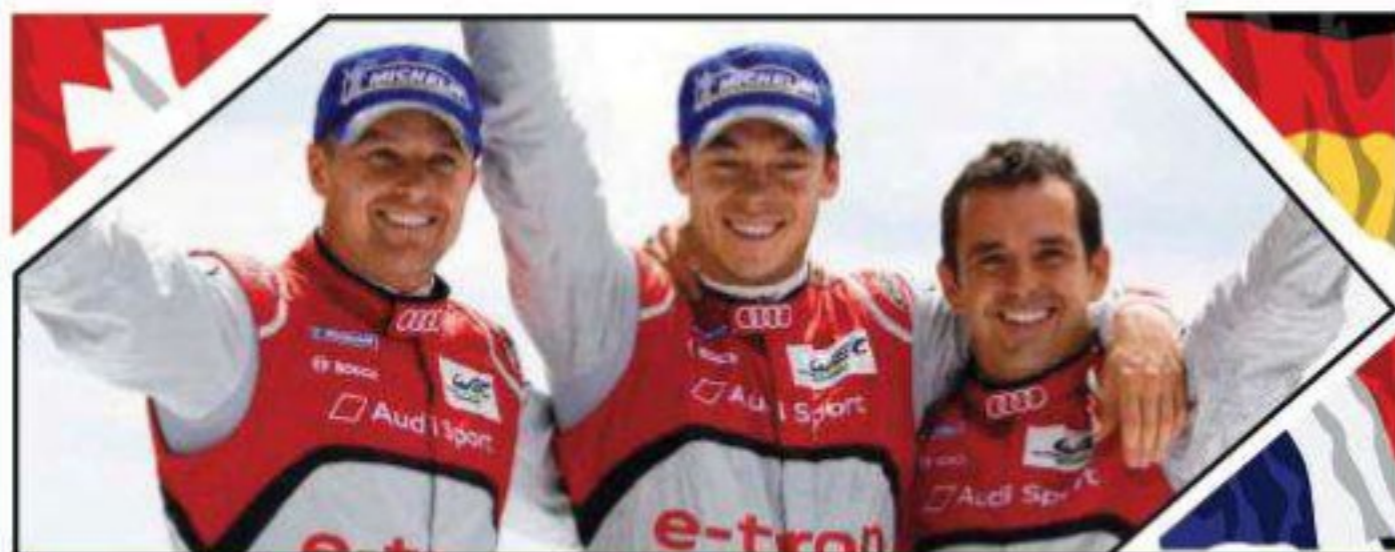
**Sebastian Vettel (D)**

Formula 1 World Champion  
(Wins: 5)



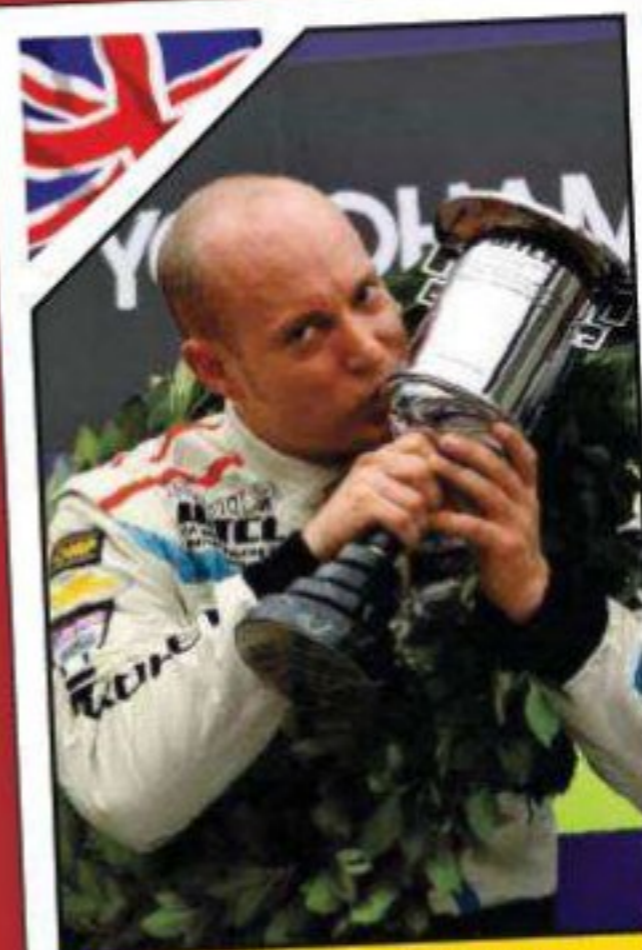
**Sebastien Loeb (F)**

World Rally Champion  
(Wins: 9)



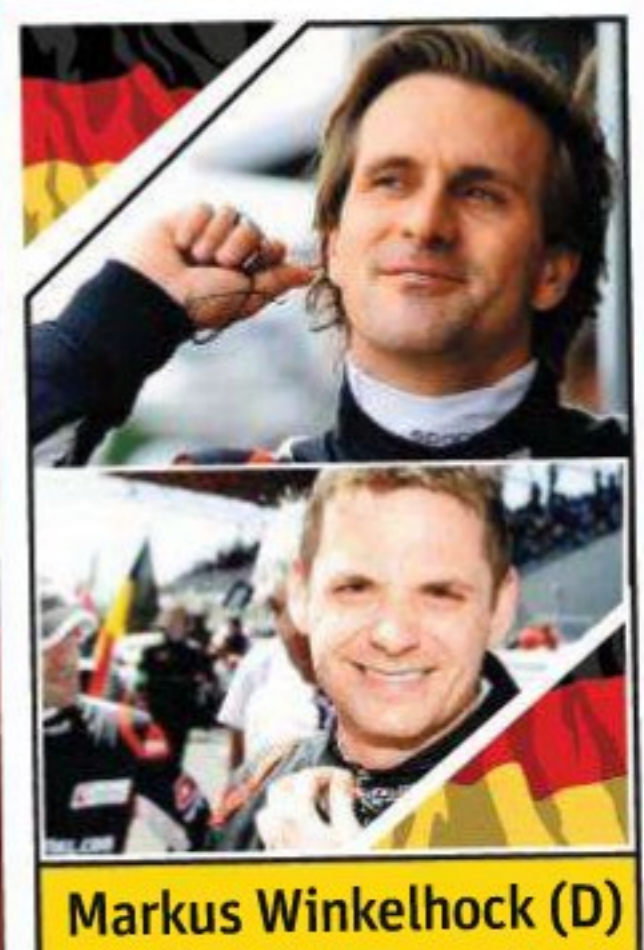
**Marcel Fassler (CH)/Andre Lotterer (D)/Benoit Treluyer (F)**

World Endurance Champions – Audi  
(Wins: 3)



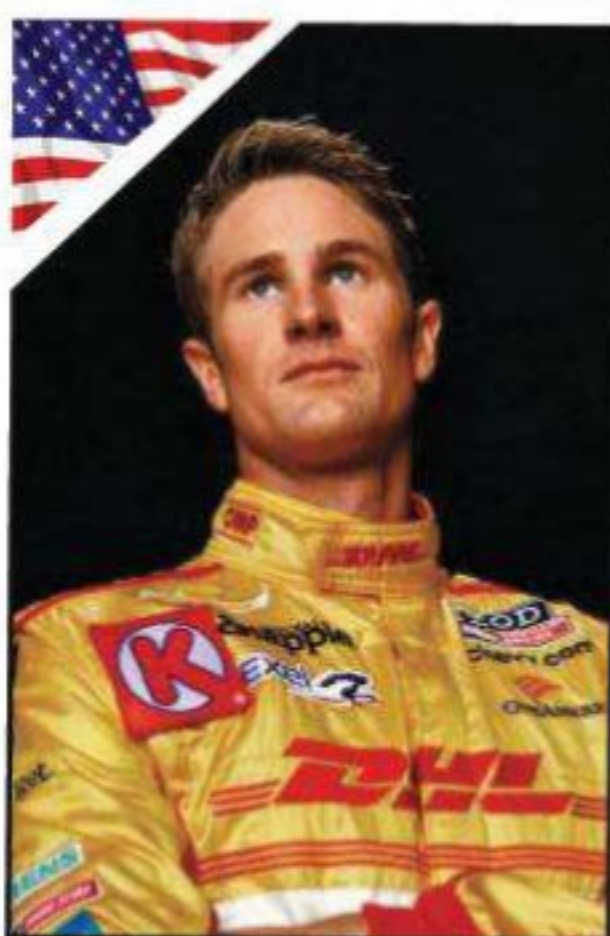
**Rob Huff (GB)**

World Touring Car Champion  
(Wins: 5)



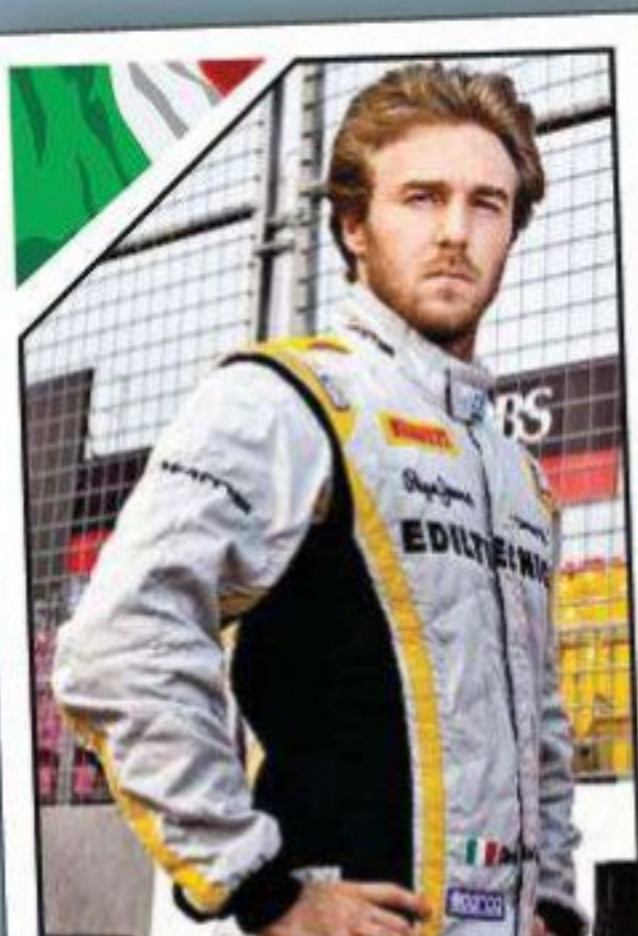
**Markus Winkelhock (D)  
& Marc Basseng (D)**

FIA GT1 World Champions  
(Wins: 1 – qual race)



**Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA)**

IndyCar Champion  
(Wins: 4)



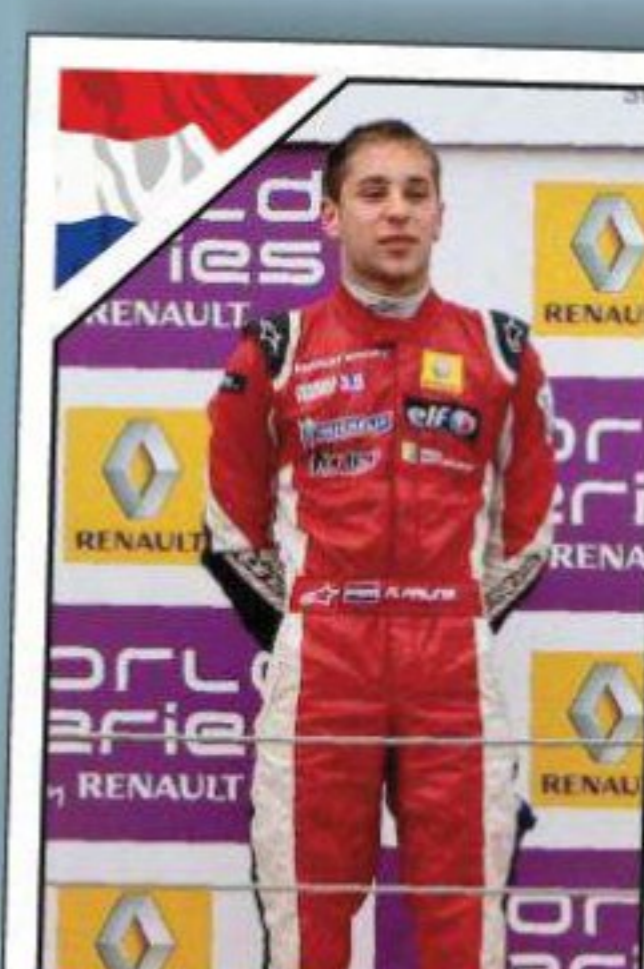
**Davide Valsecchi (I)**

GP2 Champion  
(Wins: 4)



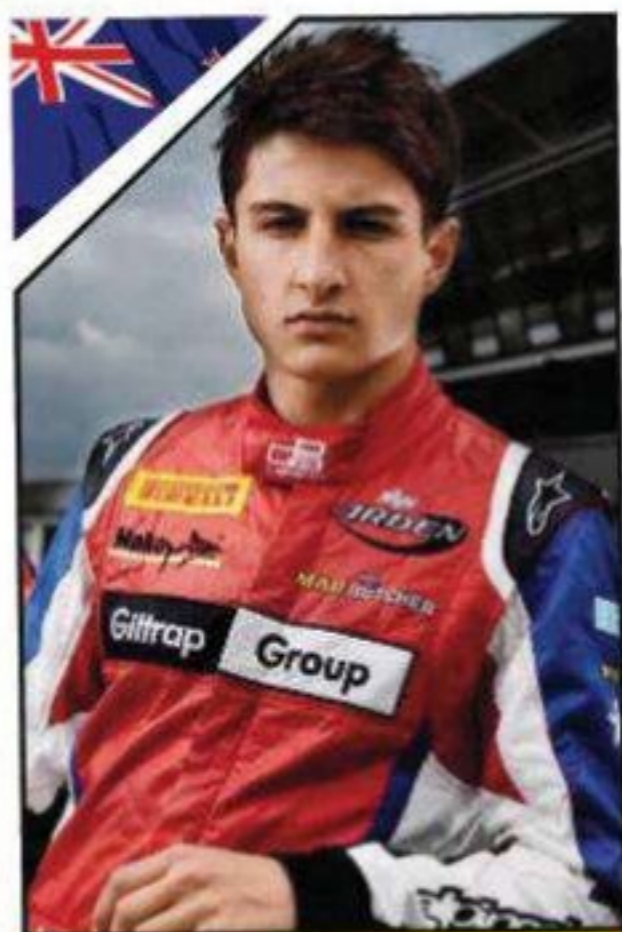
**Kazuki Nakajima (J)**

Formula Nippon Champion  
(Wins: 2)



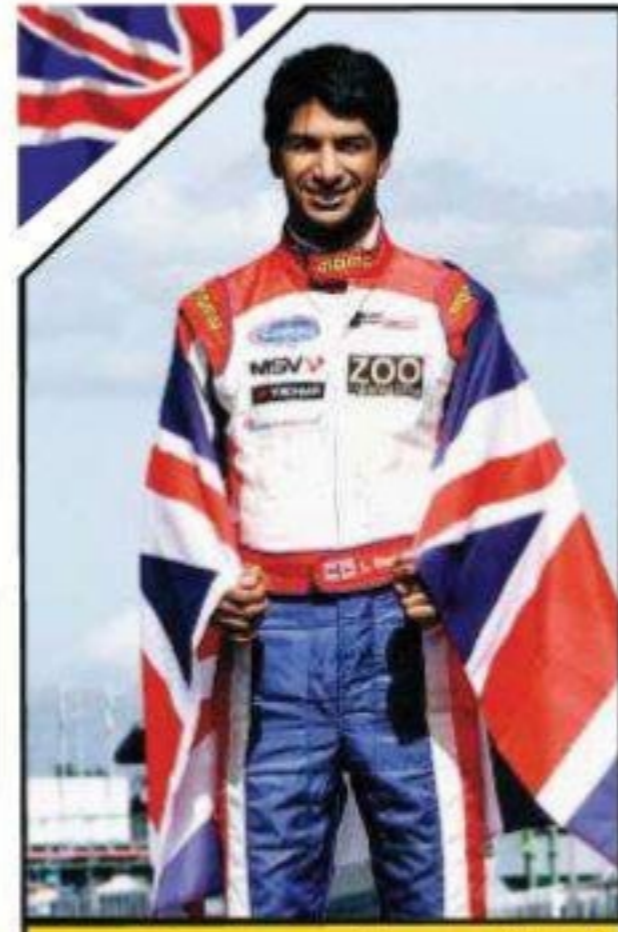
**Robin Frijns (NL)**

FRenault 3.5 Champion  
(Wins: 3)



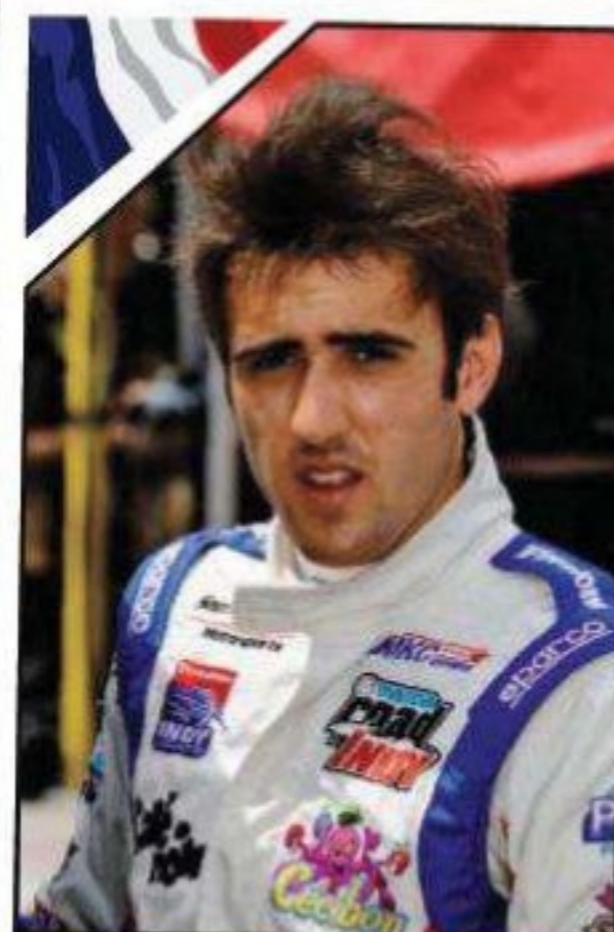
**Mitch Evans (NZ)**

GP3 Champion  
(Wins: 3)



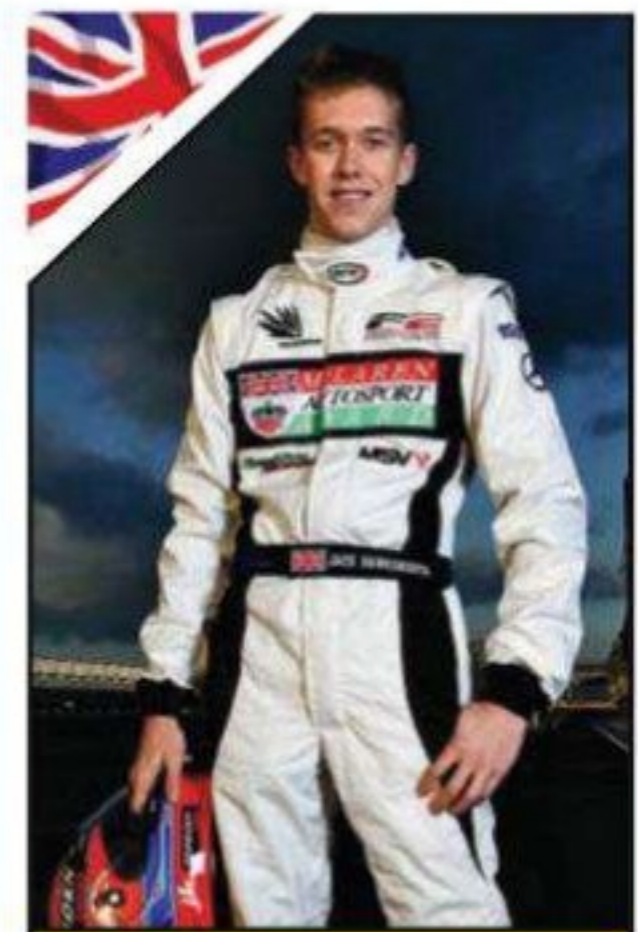
**Luciano Bacheta (GB)**

FIA Formula 2 Champion  
(Wins: 5)



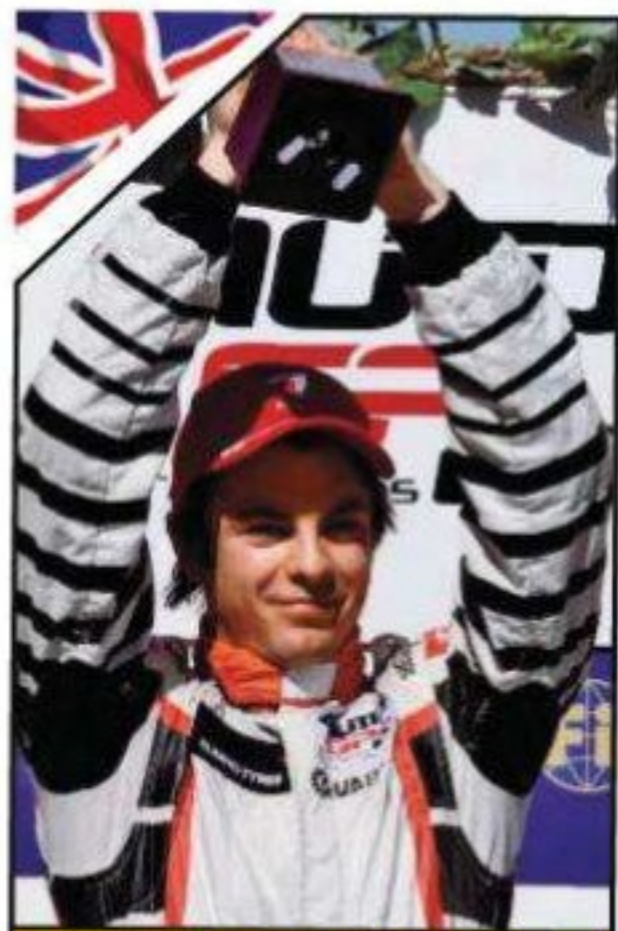
**Tristan Vautier (F)**

Indy Lights Champion  
(Wins: 4)



**Jack Hawksworth (GB)**

Star Mazda Champion  
(Wins: 8)



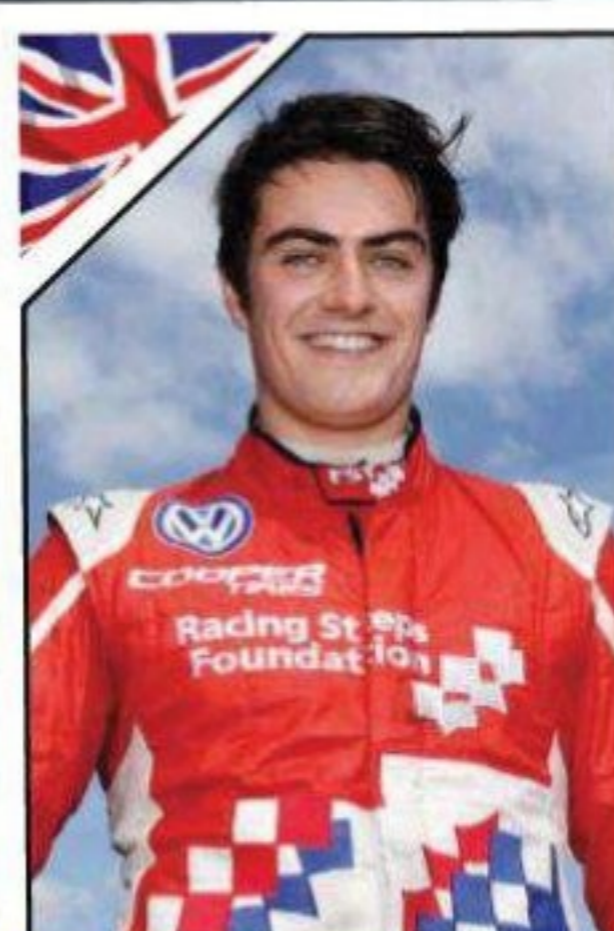
**Adrian Quaife-Hobbs (GB)**

Auto GP Champion  
(Wins: 5)



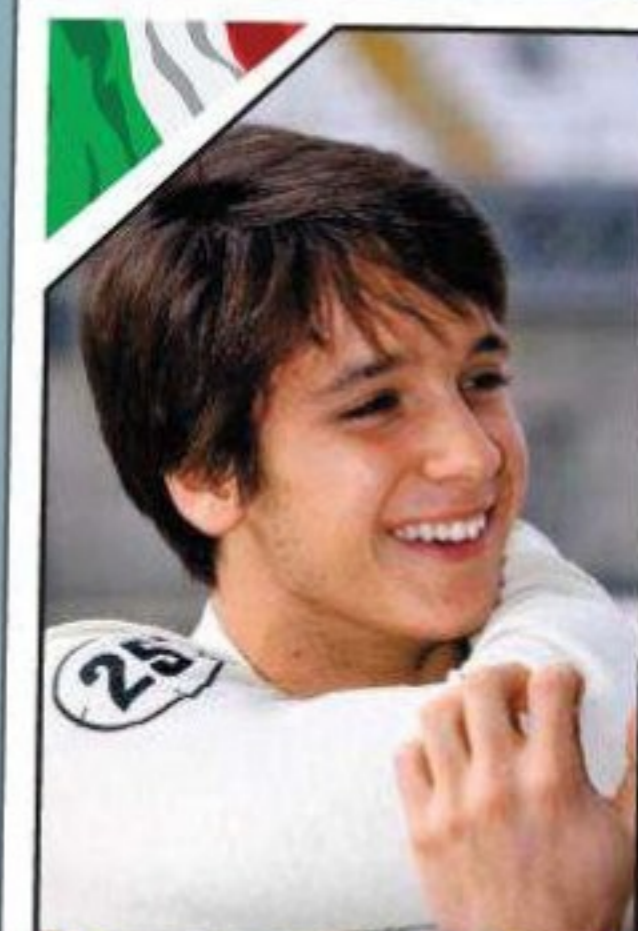
**Daniel Juncadella (E)**

F3 Euro Series Champion  
(Wins: 5)



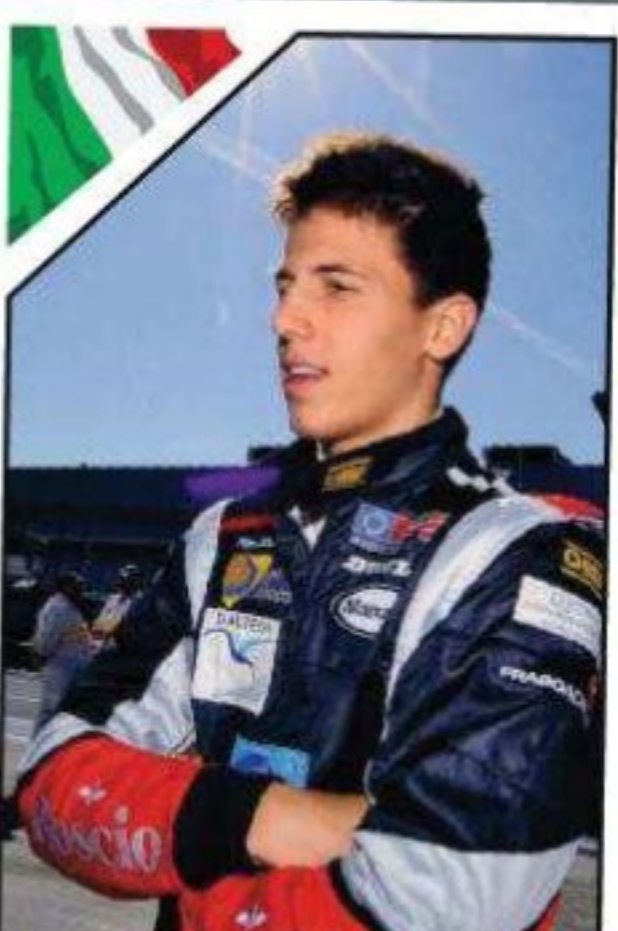
**Jack Harvey (GB)**

British F3 Champion  
(Wins: 7)



**Riccardo Agostini (I)**

Italian F3 Champion  
(Wins: 6)



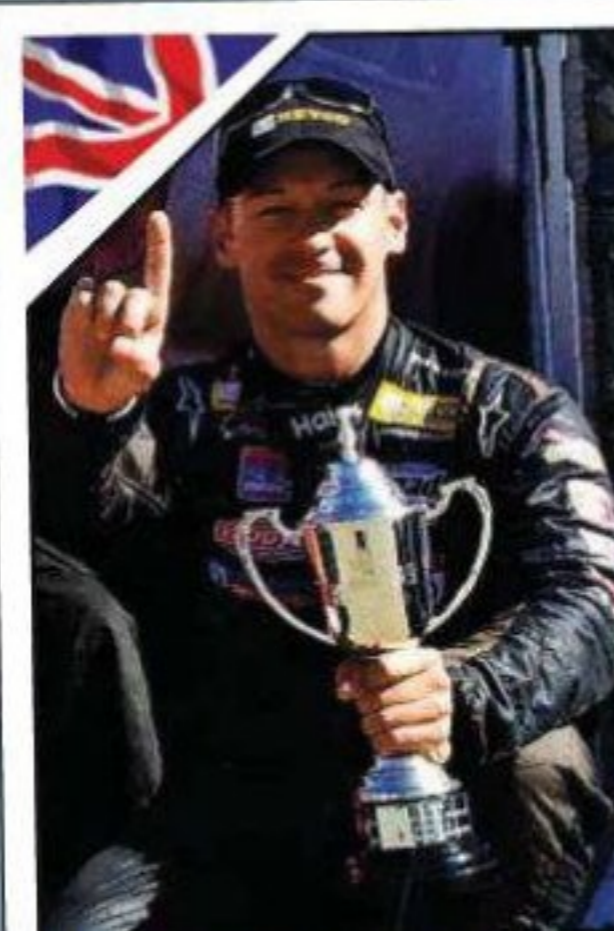
**Niccolò Schiro (I)**

F3 Open Champion  
(Wins: 4)



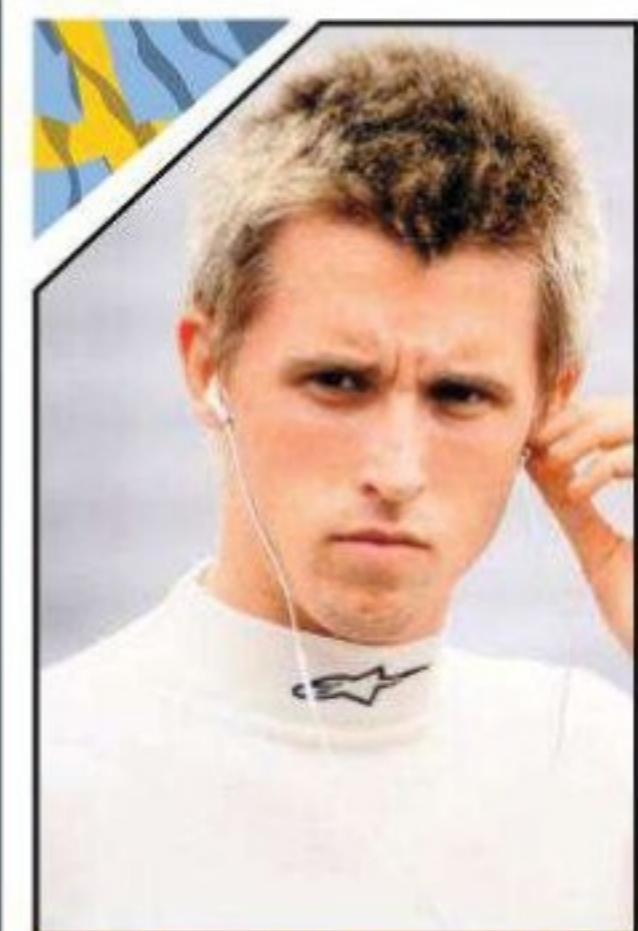
**Ryo Hirakawa (J)**

Japanese F3 Champion  
(Wins: 7)



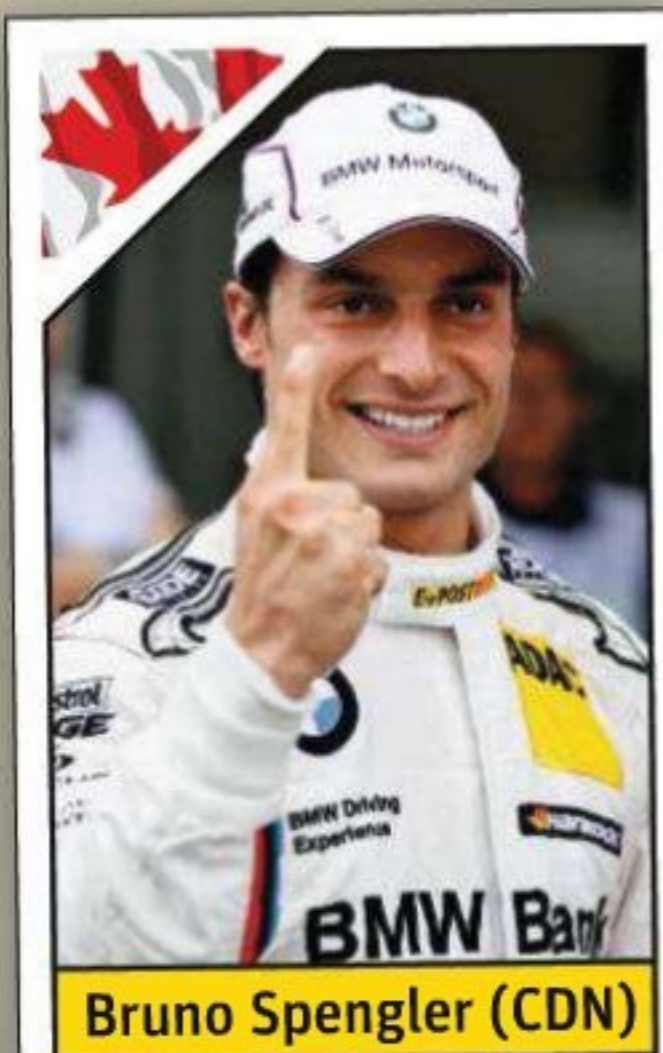
**James Winslow (GB)**

Australian F3 Champion  
(Wins: 13)



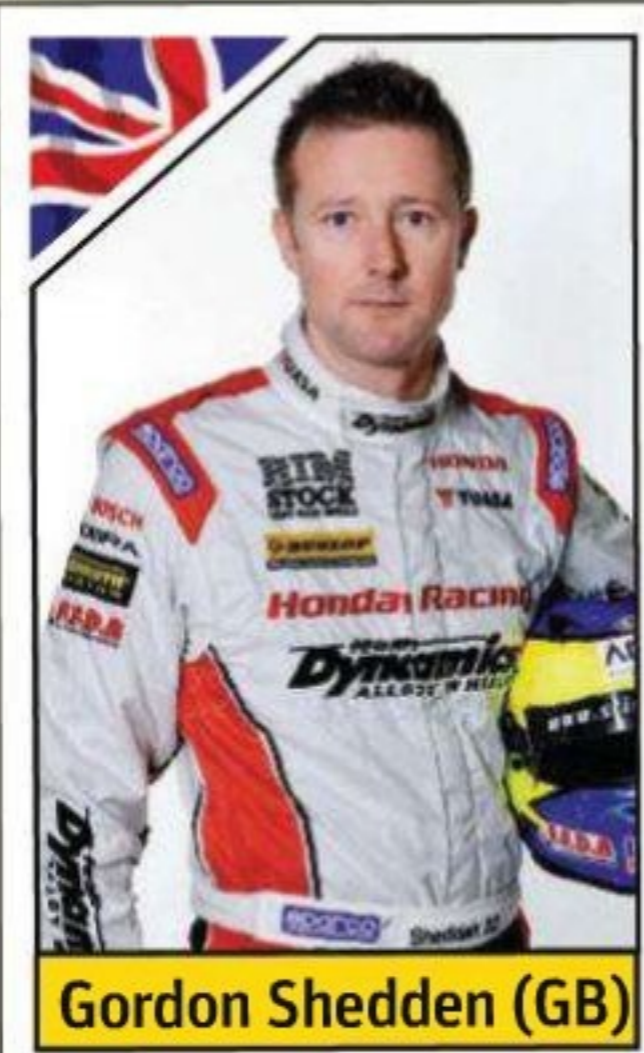
**Jimmy Eriksson (S)**

German F3 Champion  
(Wins: 8)



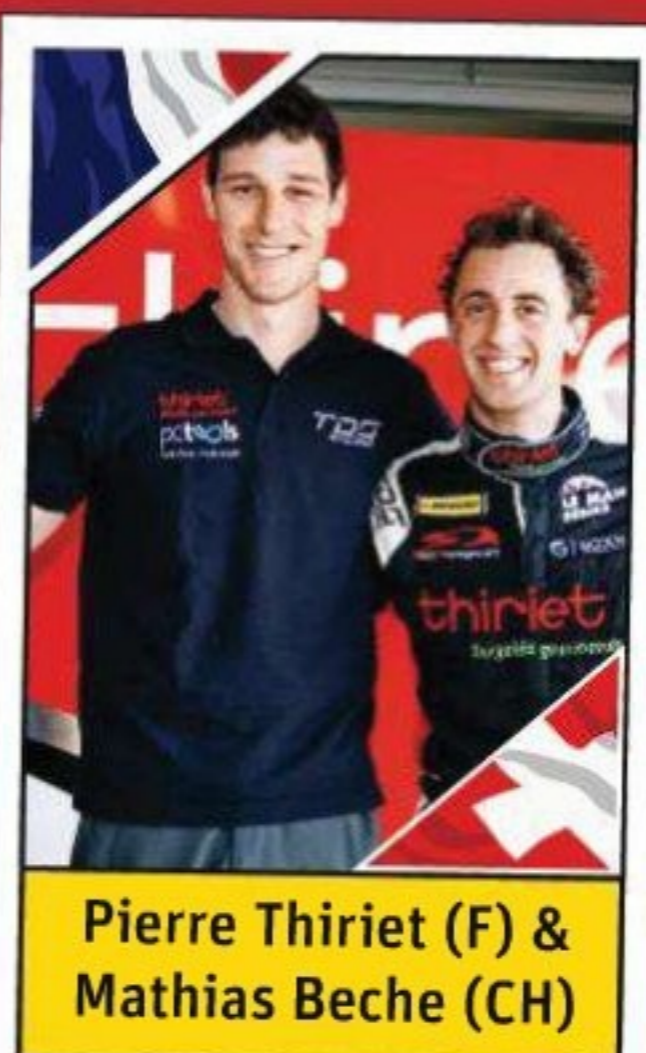
**Bruno Spengler (CDN)**

DTM Champion  
(Wins: 4)



**Gordon Shedden (GB)**

BTCC Champion  
(Wins: 8)



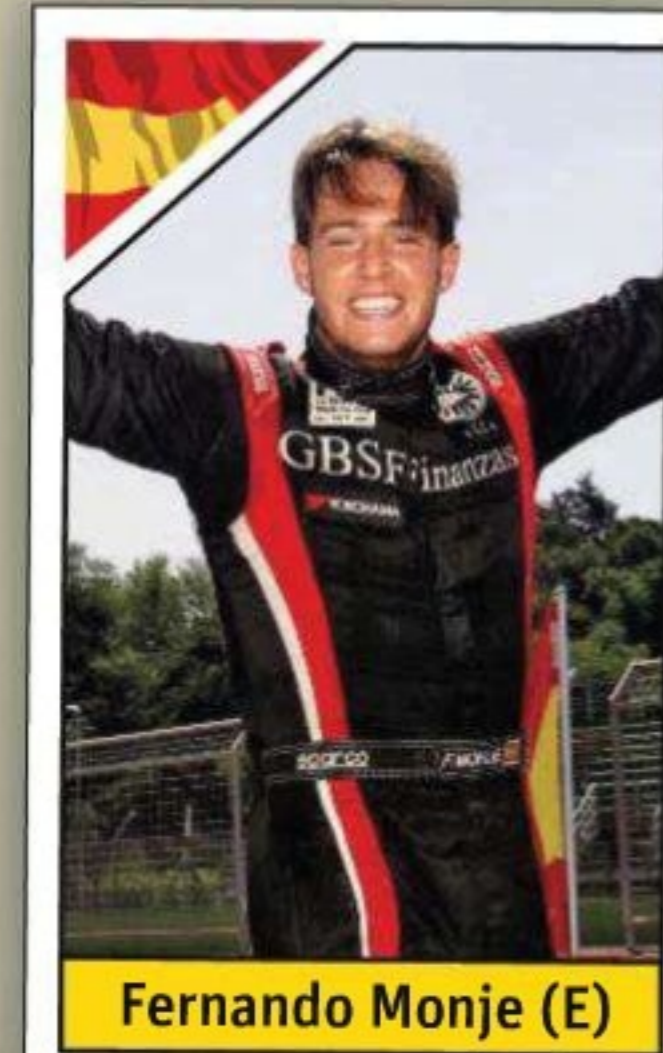
**Pierre Thiriet (F) & Mathias Beche (CH)**

ELMS Champion  
(Wins: 2)



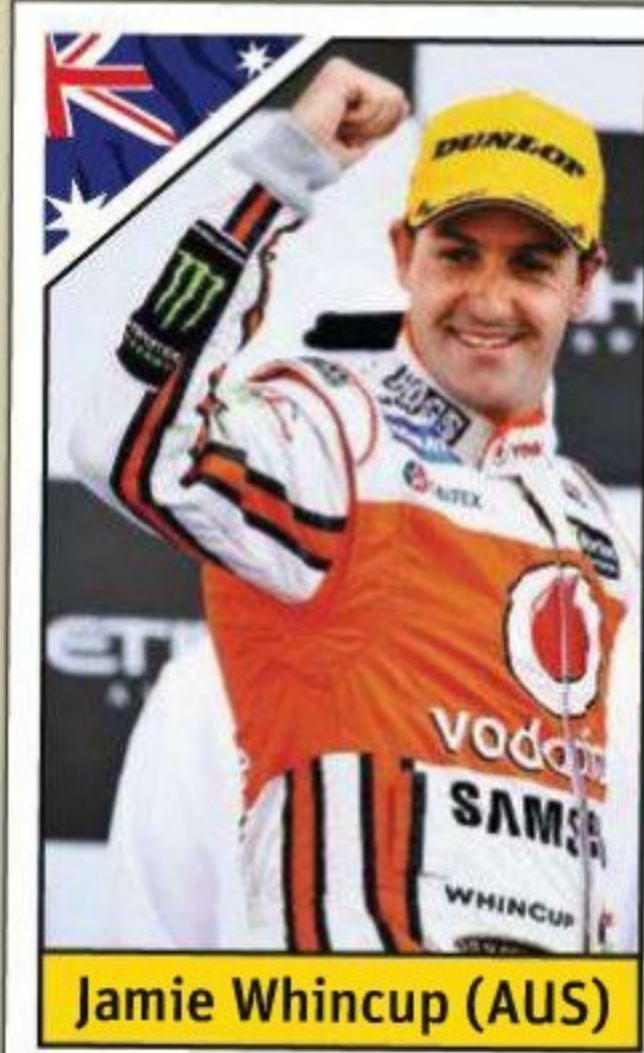
**Lucas Luhr (D) & Klaus Graf (D)**

ALMS Champions  
(Wins: 6)



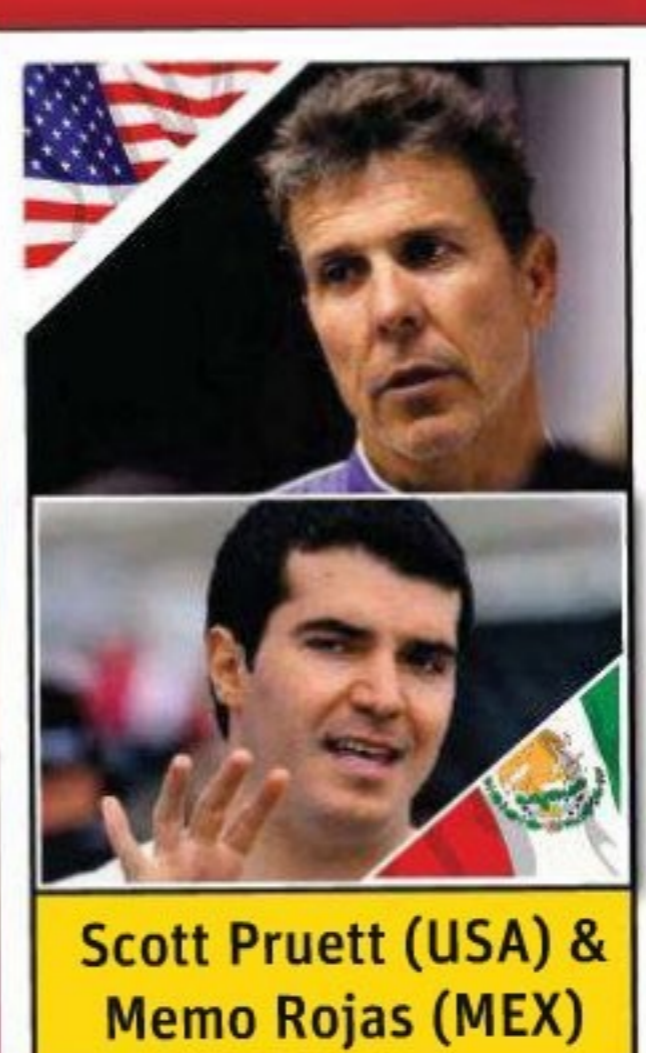
**Fernando Monje (E)**

ETC Cup Champion  
(Wins: 6)



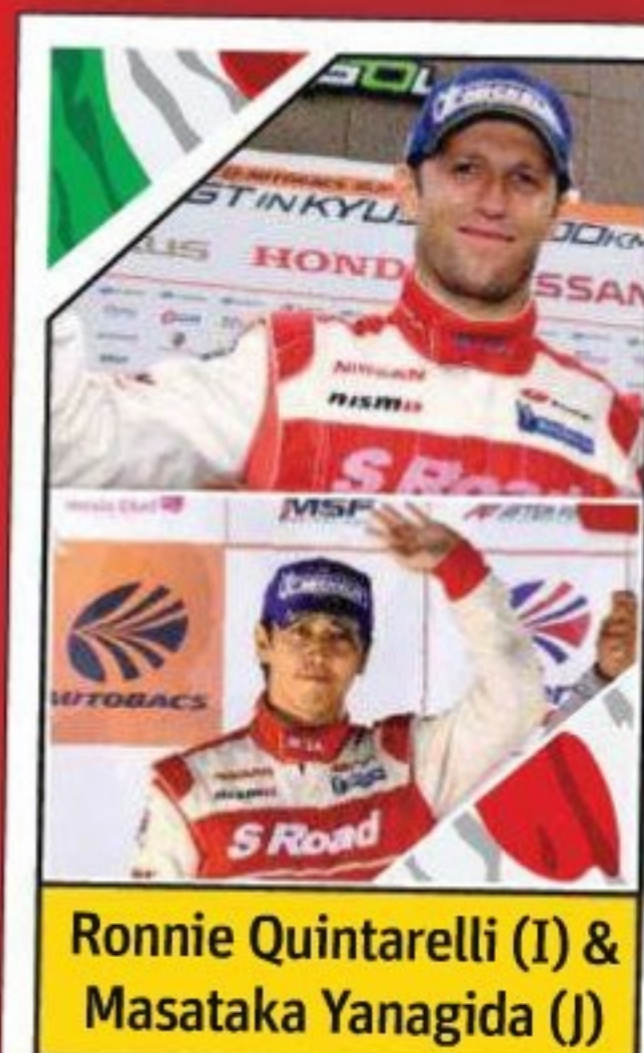
**Jamie Whincup (AUS)**

V8 Supercar Champion  
(Wins: 12)



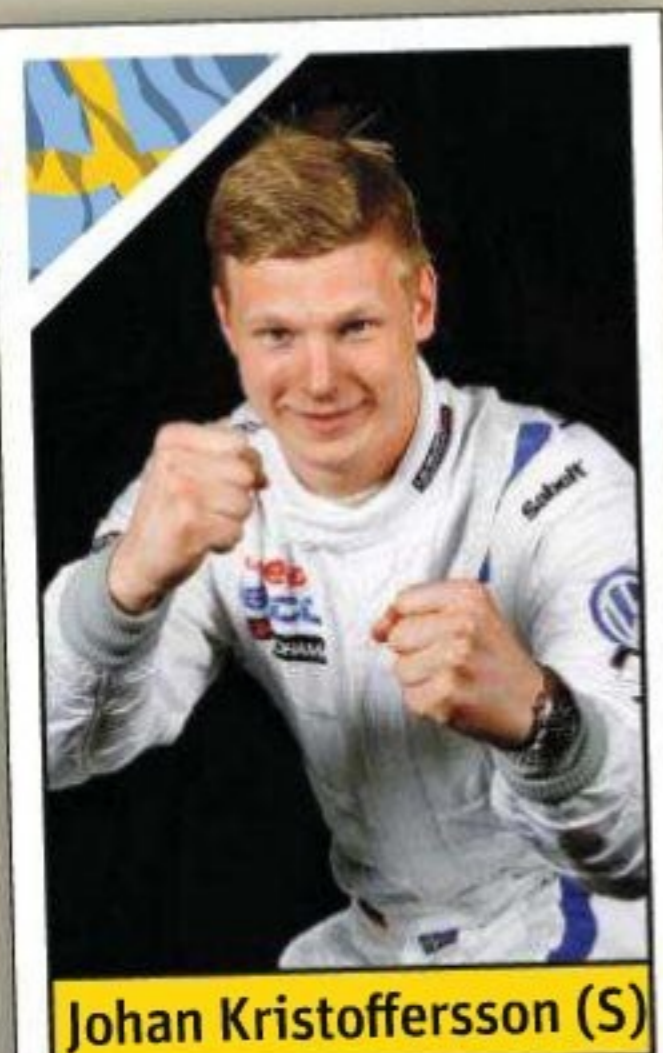
**Scott Pruett (USA) & Memo Rojas (MEX)**

Grand-Am Champions  
(Wins: 2)



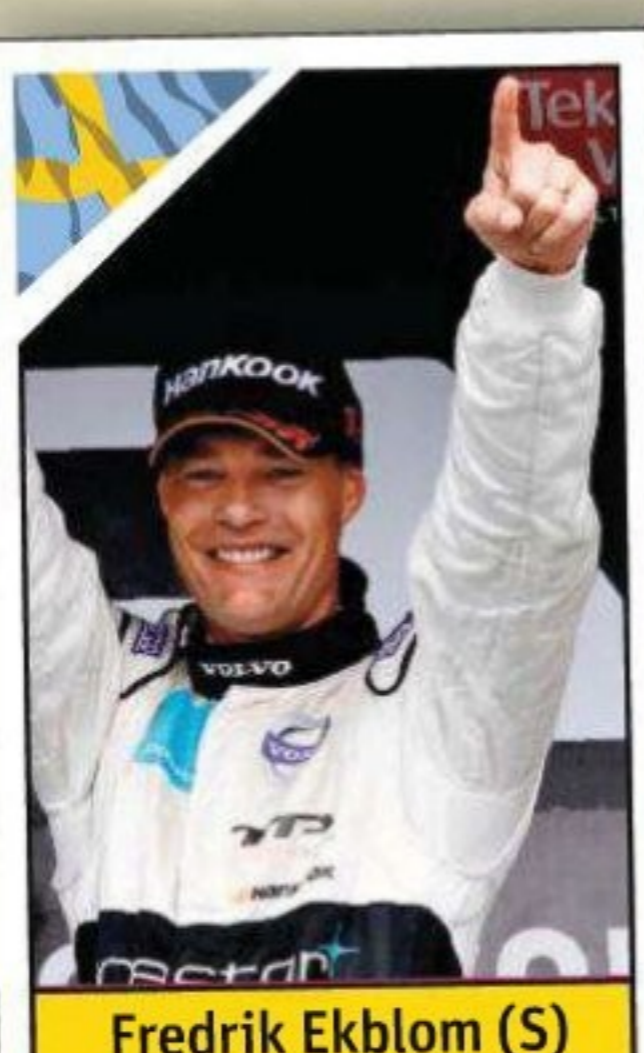
**Ronnie Quintarelli (I) & Masataka Yanagida (J)**

Super GT Champions  
(Wins: 2)



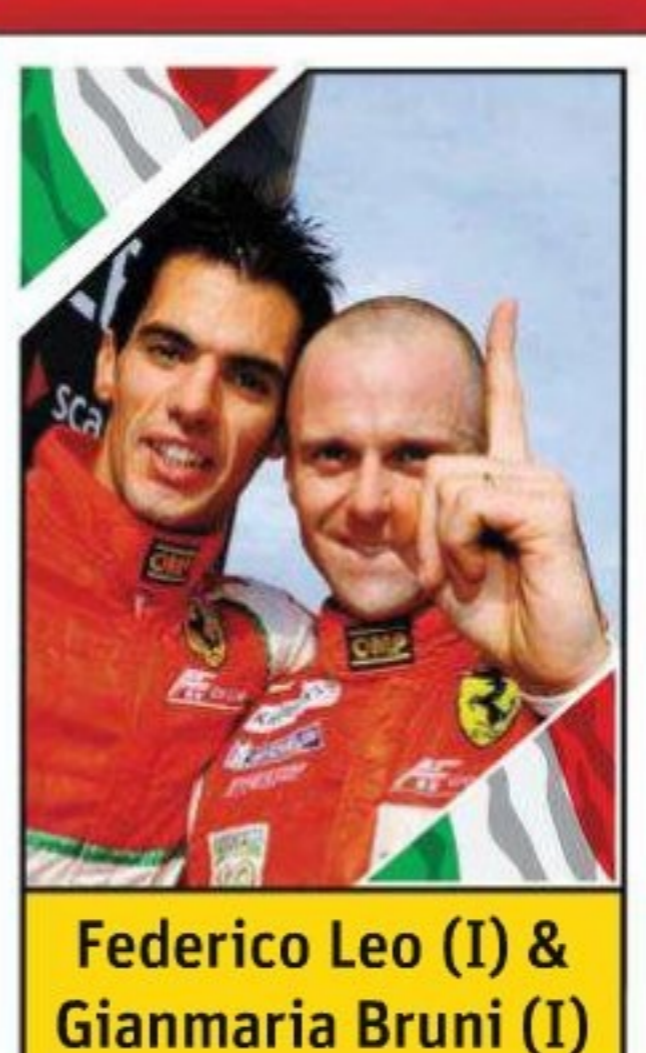
**Johan Kristoffersson (S)**

Superstars/STCC Champion  
(Wins: 4/5)



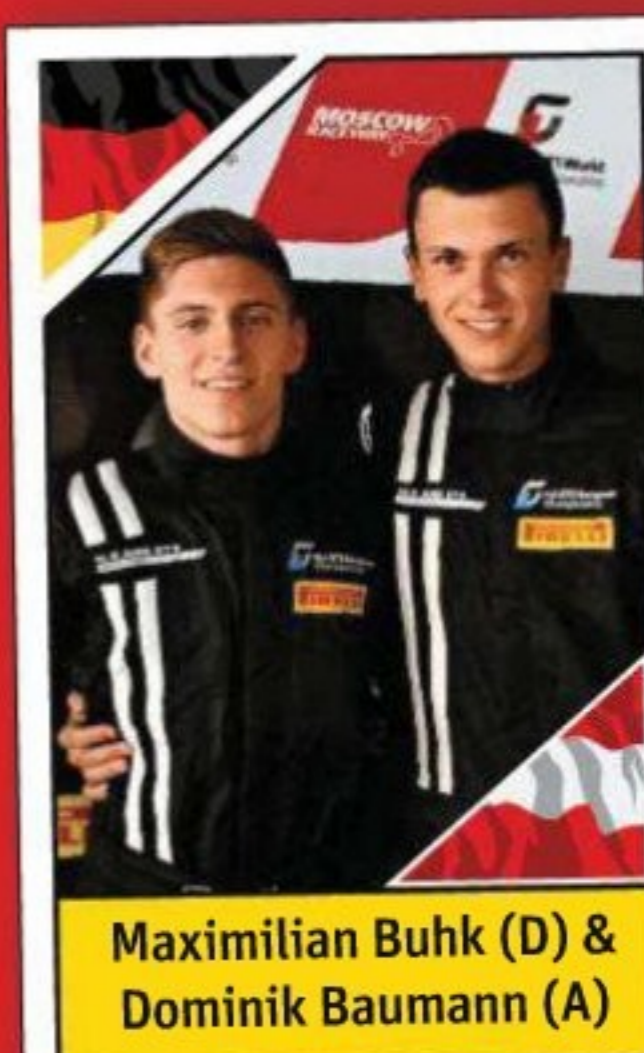
**Fredrik Ekblom (S)**

TTA Champion  
(Wins: 2)



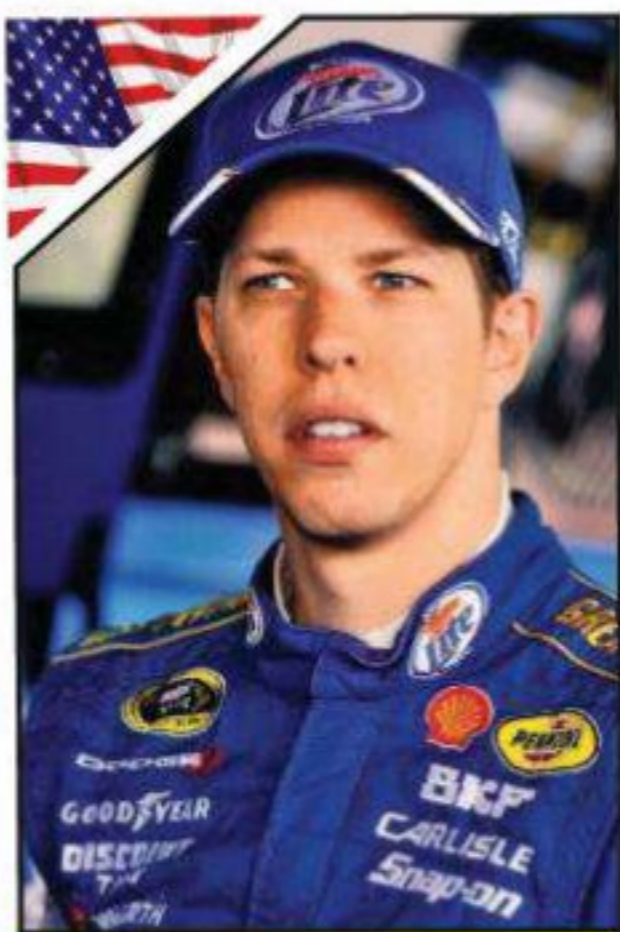
**Federico Leo (I) & Gianmaria Bruni (I)**

Int GT Open Champions  
(Wins: 2)



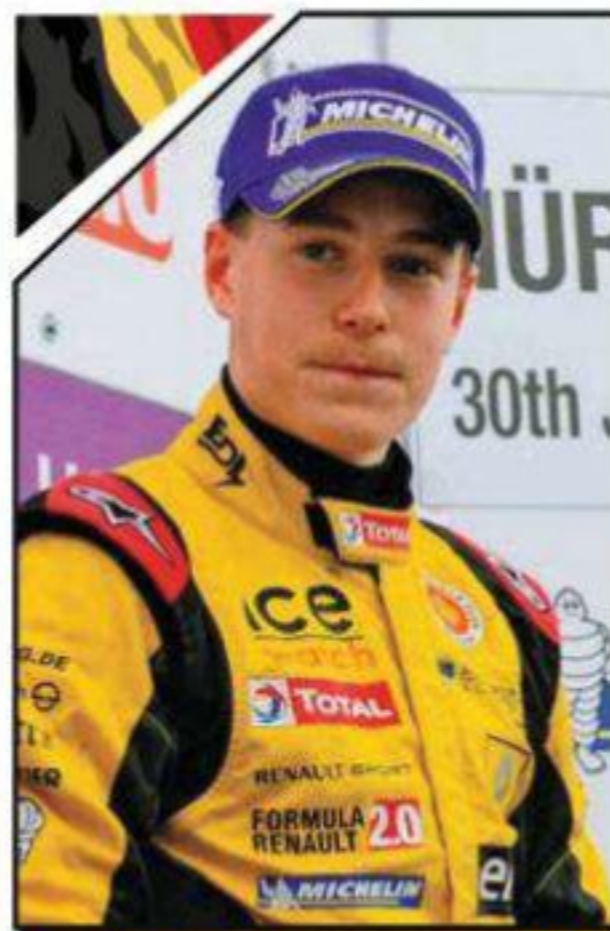
**Maximilian Buhk (D) & Dominik Baumann (A)**

FIA GT3 Champions  
(Wins: 6)



**Brad Keselowski (USA)**

NASCAR Sprint Cup Champion  
(Wins: 5)



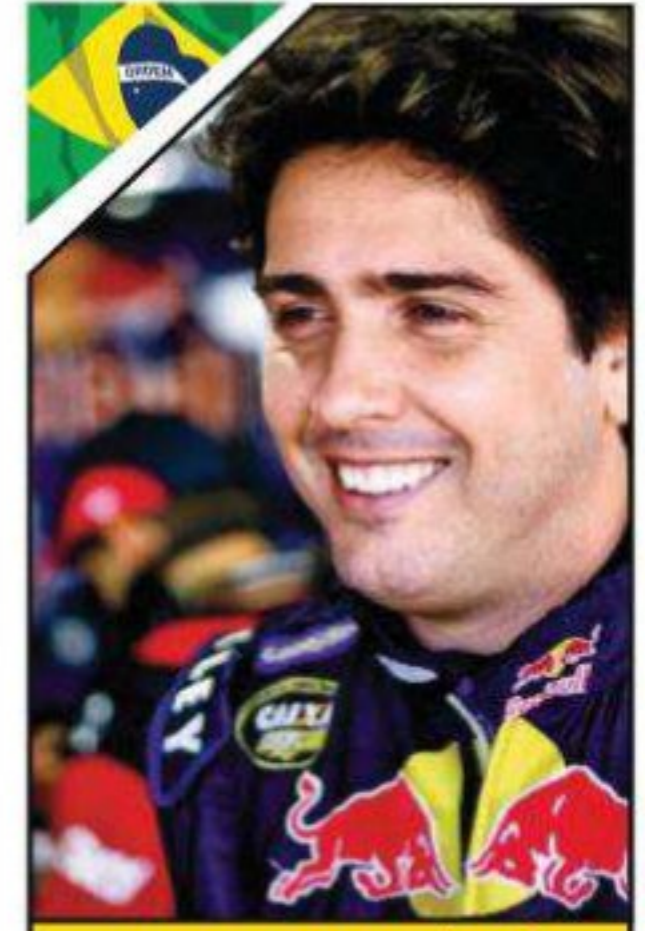
**Stoffel Vandoorne (B)**

FRenault Eurocup Champion  
(Wins: 4)



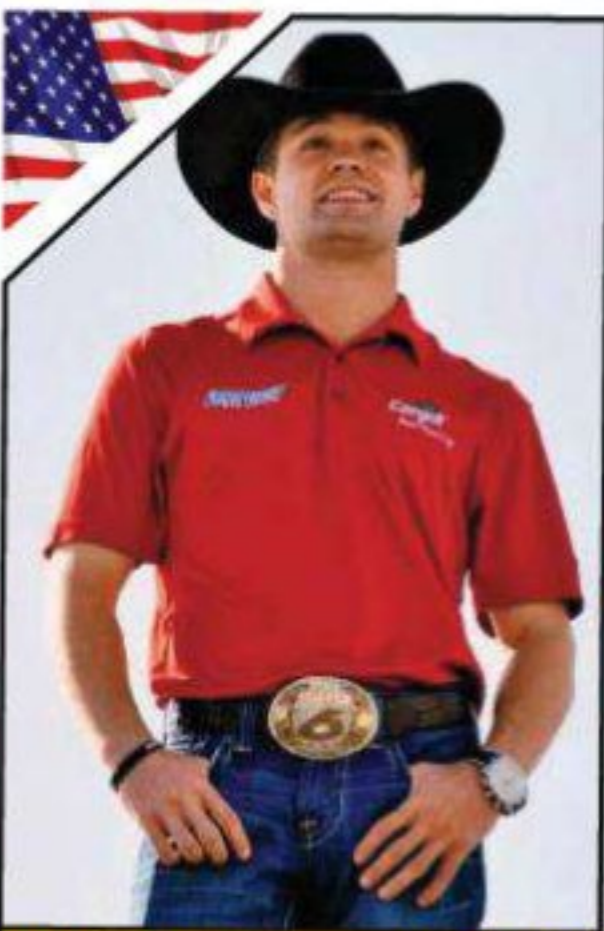
**Jose Maria Lopez (RA)**

TC2000 Champion  
(Wins: 4)



**Caca Bueno (BR)**

V8 Stock Car Champion  
(Wins: 3)



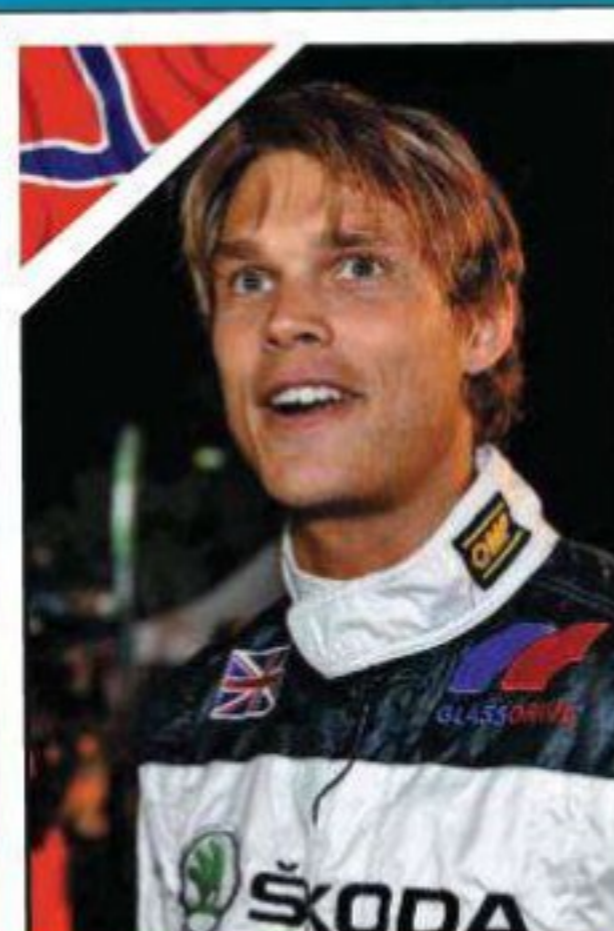
**Ricky Stenhouse Jr (USA)**

NASCAR Nationwide Champion  
(Wins: 6)



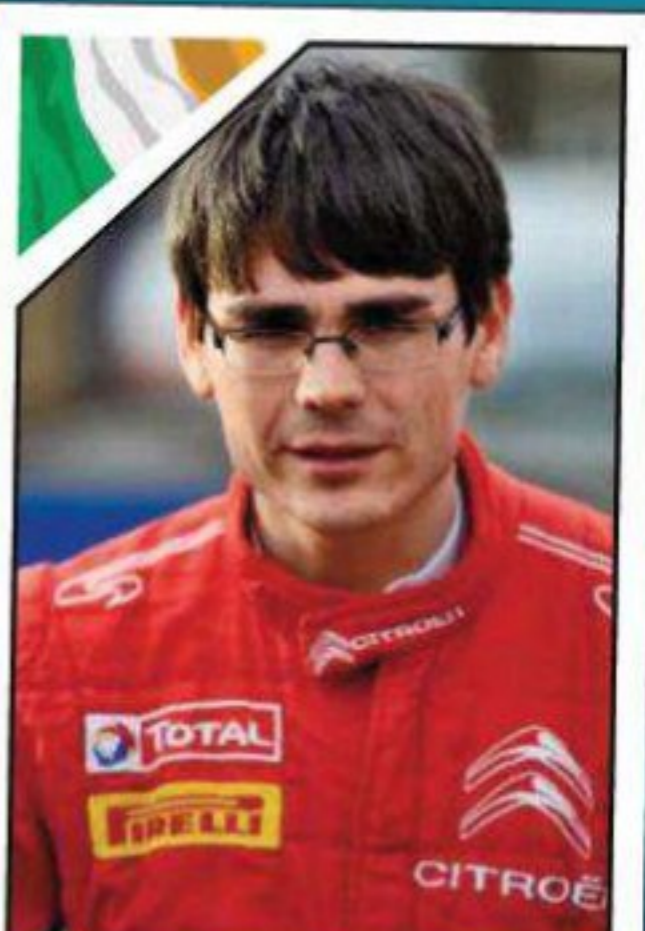
**Jake Dennis (GB)**

FRenault NEC Champion  
(Wins: 3)



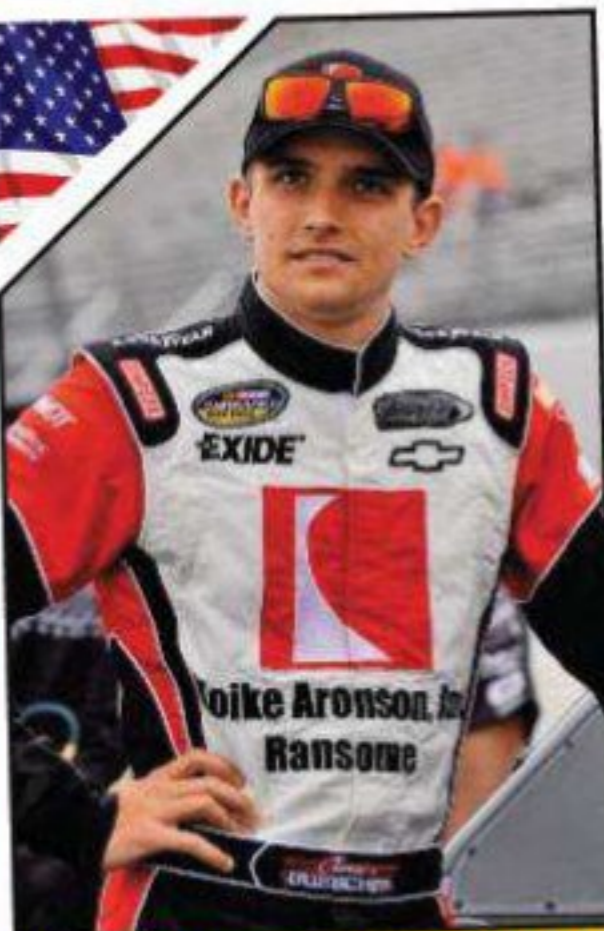
**Andreas Mikkelsen (N)**

IRC Champion  
(Wins: 2)



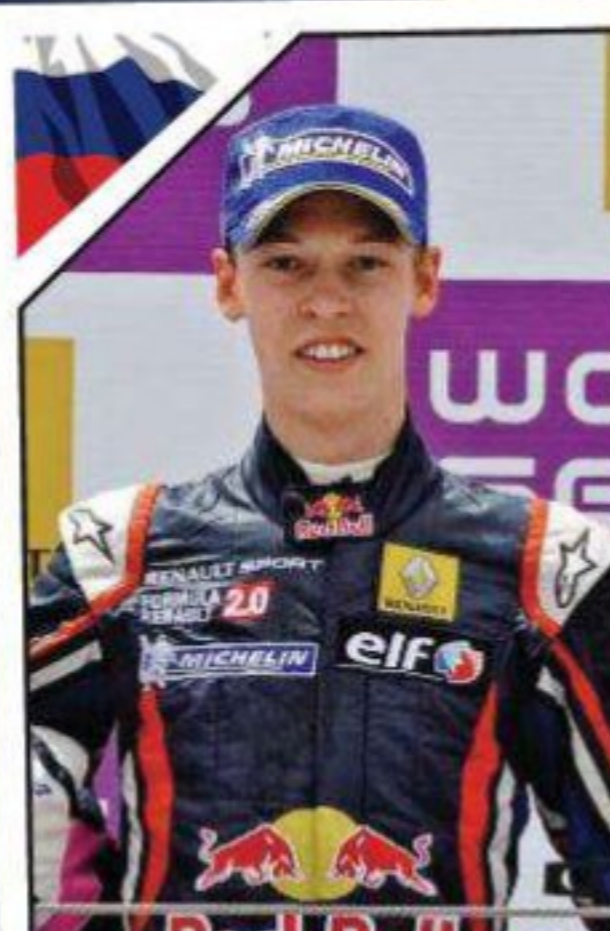
**Keith Cronin (IRL)**

British Rally Champion  
(Wins: 3)



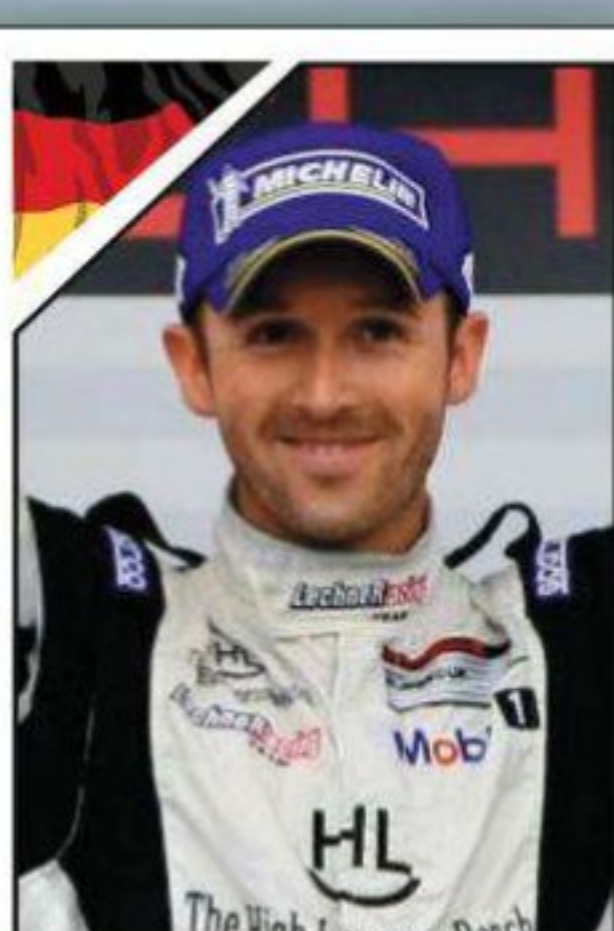
**James Buescher (USA)**

NASCAR Truck Champion  
(Wins: 4)



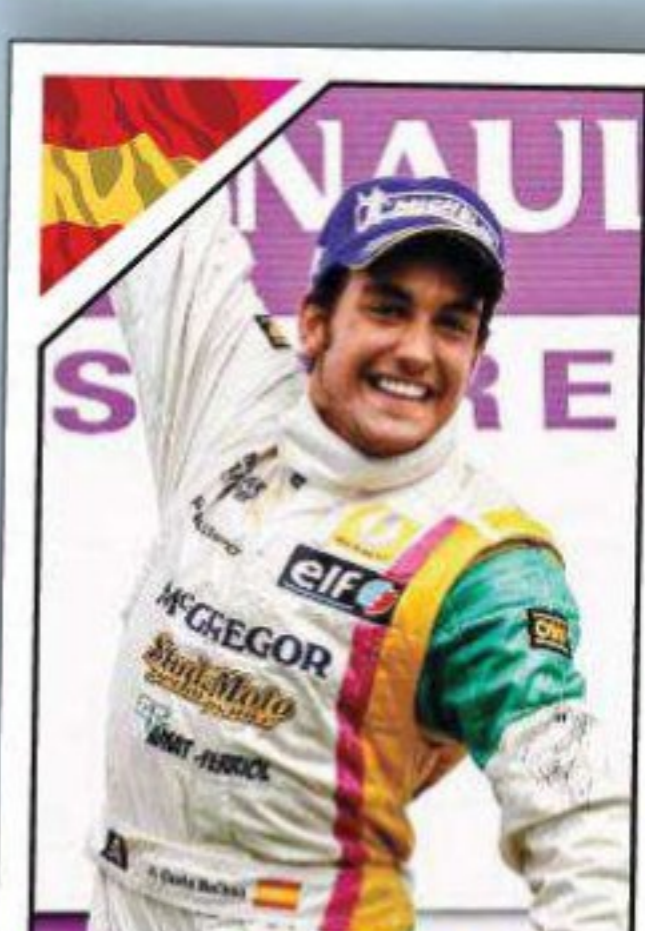
**Daniil Kvyat (RUS)**

FRenault ALPS Champion  
(Wins: 7)



**Rene Rast (D)**

Porsche Supercup Champion  
(Wins: 5)



**Albert Costa (E)**

Eurocup Megane Trophy  
(Wins: 7)

**INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS**  
**NASCAR SPRINT CUP**  
36 races, 15 winners

**QUICK RESULTS**  
→ Champion **Brad Keselowski**  
→ Runner-up **Clint Bowyer**  
→ Third **Jimmie Johnson**  
→ Top rookie **Josh Wise**

**SEASON RATING** A great season of twists and turns blighted by some boring fuel-saving races  
★★★★☆



Keselowski (2) and Johnson battled in Chase

**NASCAR SPRINT CUP**

# Brilliant Brad sends Dodge out on a high note

AS IN 2011, NASCAR'S 36-race Sprint Cup boiled down to a head to head at the Homestead season finale in November.

Again it was a tense decider, even if ultimately Penske Racing and Brad Keselowski were allowed to get away with a strategic blunder as Jimmie Johnson's hopes went up in the smoke of a blown motor.

Keselowski's five wins, underscored by some great fuel-saving and well-observed set-up calls, earned team owner Roger

Penske his first Cup title after three decades of trying. It also meant that Dodge's involvement with top-level stock car racing ended in style.

In his quest for a sixth title Johnson also took five wins, but a blown tyre at the penultimate race sent him into the wall and meant he was very much on the back foot at Homestead. The engine failure actually consigned him to third in the standings behind the surprise combination of Clint Bowyer and

Michael Waltrip Racing.

The withdrawal of Red Bull Racing at the end of 2011 pushed MWR nearer the top of Toyota's 'favoured-son' list, and the team flourished. Bowyer was victorious on the twists of Sears Point, the Richmond short track and the Charlotte 1.5-mile 'cookie cutter'. He was the team's only winner, but veteran Mark Martin took four pole positions, while Martin Truex Jr racked up seven top-five finishes on his way to 11th in points.

Bowyer's title hopes

ended when he was deliberately taken out by Jeff Gordon at Phoenix – supposedly retaliation for a season's worth of indiscretion by Bowyer.

Gordon, who scored his 87th Cup win at Homestead, made the title shoot-out, but a stuck throttle at the opening Chase race at Chicagoland ended his hopes almost before he began. New Hendrick team-mate Kasey Kahne stepped up after a poor start to the season, claiming two wins and fourth in the standings.

Dale Earnhardt Jr in the fourth Hendrick Chevy had a fine run in the middle of the season and led the standings for a few weeks. But a big crash at Talladega (all but six cars were involved) gave him concussion and forced him to miss two Chase races.

Tony Stewart started his title defence well, winning two of the opening five races. And while he made

the Chase, he was never a serious contender for the crown. Still, he fared considerably better than 2011 rival Carl Edwards, who failed to win a race all season and missed the Chase by miles.

His Roush Fenway Ford team-mate Matt Kenseth won the rain-delayed Daytona 500 and two other races. But two Chase retirements were his undoing. Denny Hamlin scored five wins in his Joe Gibbs Toyota, but variable results in the Chase meant he was never a factor.

● Connell Sanders Jr

**FINAL STANDINGS**

- 1 Brad Keselowski (Dodge Charger), 2400;
- 2 Clint Bowyer (Toyota Camry), 2361;
- 3 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet Impala), 2360;
- 4 Kasey Kahne (Chevy), 2345;
- 5 Greg Biffle (Ford Fusion), 2332;
- 6 Denny Hamlin (Toyota), 2329;
- 7 Matt Kenseth (Ford), 2324;
- 8 Kevin Harvick (Chevy), 2321;
- 9 Tony Stewart (Chevy), 2311;
- 10 Jeff Gordon (Chevy), 2303.

Only six – including winner Kenseth – escaped massive Talladega shunt



## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### FORMULA NIPPON

8 races, 5 winners

### QUICK RESULTS

- Champion **Kazuki Nakajima**
- 2nd **Kodai Tsukakoshi**
- 3rd **Takuya Izawa**
- Team **Dandelion Racing**

**SEASON RATING** Tight title battle, but few classic races

★★★★☆☆

## WORLD OF SPORT SEASONAL SURVEYS

### ALL-JAPAN FORMULA NIPPON CHAMPIONSHIP

# Nakajima sees off the opposition at home

WHEN KAZUKI NAKAJIMA opted to return to Japanese motorsport for 2011 after his Formula 1 career ended, he admitted he was taking a huge gamble.

That gamble paid off handsomely when he was crowned Formula Nippon champion this year, joining his father – five-time champion Satoru Nakajima – on the list of title winners in Japan's premier single-seater series.

The TOM'S Swift-Toyota driver kicked off his second season in the series with victory at Suzuka, but he had to wait until the final points-paying race of the year to take another. During the intervening period

Andre Lotterer, Kodai Tsukakoshi, Joao Paulo de Oliveira and Takuya Izawa all won races and arrived at the final double-header in with a chance of glory.

None could match Nakajima's consistency, however, as the ex-Williams Formula 1 driver recorded only one non-score all year.

Nowhere was his fighting spirit more evident than at Fuji, where he finished second after a wheel-to-wheel battle with his team-mate Lotterer that resulted in the German spinning off. Nakajima's masterful drive from ninth on the grid to victory in the season finale at Suzuka was another highlight.



Nakajima was pushed hard by Tsukakoshi

Ex-F3 Euro Series racer Tsukakoshi, who finished second in the points, scored his breakthrough win at Autopolis. Two fine late-season wins for his team-mate Takuya Izawa were enough to give the Honda-powered Dandelion squad the teams' title ahead of Toyota team TOM'S.

Izawa's victories netted him third in the points,

ahead of Lotterer and Team Impul man de Oliveira.

### FINAL STANDINGS

1 Kazuki Nakajima (Swift-Toyota FN09), 46; 2 Kodai Tsukakoshi (S-Honda), 43; 3 Takuya Izawa (SH), 41.5; 4 Andre Lotterer (ST), 35.5; 5 Joao Paulo de Oliveira (ST), 34.5; 6 Loic Duval (ST), 25; 7 Kazuya Oshima (ST), 21.5; 8 Tsuguo Matsuda (ST), 20; 9 Kohei Hirate (ST), 8; 10 Takashi Kogure (SH), 4.

## IN BRIEF

### Stenhouse celebrates



### NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Roush Ford man Ricky Stenhouse Jr made it back-to-back titles as long-time rival Elliott Sadler (RCR Chevy) suffered a late-season slump. Interloper Joey Logano won nine times in his Joe Gibbs Toyota.

### EUROPEAN TOURING CARS

Spaniard Fernando Monje won six of the eight races in his SUNRED SEAT to take the title and move into the WTCC for the second half of the year. Team-mate Michal Matejovsky and Petr Fulín (Kretek BMW) also won races.

### V8 DEVELOPMENT SERIES

Stone Brothers' Scott McLaughlin won the title in his Ford at the finale after Walkinshaw Holden driver Nick Percat crashed out. Scott Pye was second overall in his Triple 8 Holden.

### SUPER TC2000

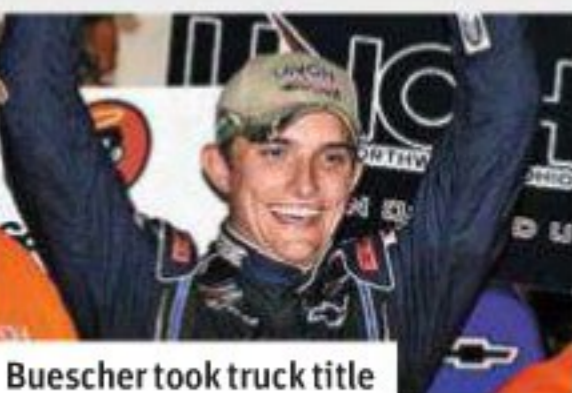
Jose Maria Lopez took his third title – and his first for the PSG16 Ford team – thanks to four mid-season wins. Matias Rossi (Toyota) and Nestor Girolami (Peugeot) pushed him hardest.

### EUROCUP MEGANE TROPHY

Albert Costa won six of the last seven races with the Oregon team to snatch the title from TDS driver Bas Schothorst at a crash-filled Barcelona season finale. Costa won seven times in all.

### NASCAR TRUCKS

James Buescher only took the series lead with three races to go, but the Turner Chevrolet driver's four wins were enough to make him champion ahead of Timothy Peters (Red Horse Toyota) and Joey Coulter (RCR Chevy).



Buescher took truck title

### GRAND-AM

# Three in a row for Pruett, Rojas and Ganassi

SCOTT PRUETT AND MEMO Rojas clinched their third successive Grand-Am title in what was one of the closest-fought seasons in series history.

The Chip Ganassi Racing pair showed metronomic consistency to add six additional podium finishes to their summer victories at Road America and Montreal.

It was during the

Canadian race that the title began to look a certainty for the pair and their Riley-BMW as their most serious long-term rival, Scot Ryan Dalziel, was penalised for causing a spin and received significant body damage to his own Starworks Riley-Ford.

The Montreal result meant that with a 13-point advantage, Pruett/Rojas

were able to cruise and collect at the Lime Rock season finale while Dalziel finished just one spot further up with his co-driver Alex Popow.

Action Express driver Darren Law was third overall after two mid-season wins and was the highest-placed Corvette DP driver too. The series' blue-riband event, the

Daytona 24 Hours, was won by Michael Shank Racing's crew of John Pew/AJ Allmendinger/Oswaldo Negri Jr/Justin Wilson with their Riley-Ford.

In the GT class, AIM Autosport drivers Emil Assentato and Jeff Segal secured the title at the penultimate race after an ultra-consistent year in their Ferrari 458. Scot Robin Liddell's title hopes were derailed by poor finishes at Indianapolis and Watkins Glen.

### FINAL STANDINGS

DP 1 Scott Pruett/Memo Rojas (Riley-BMW MkXXVI), 379; 2 Ryan Dalziel (R-Ford), 367; 3 Darren Law (Coyote Corvette DP), 355; 4 David Donohue (C-Corvette), 348; 5 Alex Popow (R-Ford), 346; 6 Max Angelelli/Ricky Taylor (Dallara-Corvette), 343. GT 1 Emil Assentato/Jeff Segal (Ferrari 458 Italia), 387; 2 Robin Liddell (Chevrolet Camaro GT.R), 360; 3 Paul Dalla Lana (BMW M3), 339.



Pruett (l) and Rojas won another title

**INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS**  
**F3 EURO SERIES/EUROPEAN F3 CHAMPIONSHIP**  
24/20 races, 10/6 winners

**QUICK RESULTS**  
→ FIA Daniel Juncadella  
→ Euro Series Juncadella  
→ Rookie Pascal Wehrlein  
→ Team Prema Powerteam

**SEASON RATING** Much more exciting than 2011, a wet/dry Norisring providing the highlight  
★★★★☆

**F3 EURO SERIES/EUROPEAN F3 CHAMPIONSHIP**

# Juncadella finally comes out on top

FOR A WHILE IT LOOKED AS IF nobody wanted to win the F3 Euro Series as a host of exclusions, collisions and penalties looked set to blight the aspirations of most of the pre-season favourites.

But in the end it was Daniel Juncadella who won out at the third attempt, adding the revived FIA European title and victory at Zandvoort's Masters of F3.

The Prema Powerteam driver won five races, but threw away plenty more through stalls, jumped starts and dubious driving.

His worst offence was pitching Pascal Wehrlein out of the lead and onto two wheels at the Norisring.

Coupled with a wheelbanging incident with his own team-mate Raffaele Marciello seconds later, he was excluded from victory. Series rules somehow contrived to leave the race without a winner as second-placed Will Buller was not moved up a spot.

From August onwards the Spaniard regained his form and was able to leave Ferrari-backed Marciello – an early-season sensation who won the Pau GP – behind.

It was Mucke Motorsport driver Wehrlein who ended up pushing Juncadella to the final race, his title challenge rooted in extraordinary consistency post-Norisring.



Juncadella (1) was pushed by Wehrlein (6)

His more experienced team-mate Felix Rosenqvist was usually faster in qualifying, and the Swede came good to win three of the last four races.

Carlos Sainz Jr started well, but slipped back during the year due to terrible luck on first laps and the Carlin team's difficulties in finding strong qualifying set-ups.

Team-mate Buller was a more consistent threat and was right in the title fight

with three rounds to go, but usually had to do the hard work in race conditions after qualifying badly more often as the year progressed.

By the end of the year Tom Blomqvist was consistently the best VW-powered performer, the Ma-con driver racking up eight top-six finishes in the final 10 races.

Brit Alexander Sims gave T-Sport and Nissan their first Euro Series wins on a

guest outing at the Nurburgring in August.  
● Jamie O'Leary

**FINAL POSITIONS**

**Euro Series** 1 Daniel Juncadella (Dallara-Mercedes F312), 240; 2 Pascal Wehrlein (DM), 229; 3 Raffaele Marciello (DM), 219.5; 4 Felix Rosenqvist (DM), 212.5; 5 Will Buller (D-Volkswagen), 182.5; 6 Sven Muller (DM), 172. **FIA European** 1 Juncadella, 240; 2 Marciello, 209.5; 3 Carlos Sainz Jr (DV), 161; 4 Wehrlein, 145; 5 Rosenqvist, 142; 6 Buller, 129.

**TTA RACING ELITE LEAGUE**

# Eklom calls on his experience

THE NEWLY-ESTABLISHED TTA, formed by a splinter group of leading Scandinavian Touring Car Championship teams opposed to the STCC's planned switch to NGTC rules for 2013, produced a battle of experience versus youth.

Representing experience, Polestar Volvo driver Fredrik Eklom added to his runner-up spot at the Karlskoga opener with a win at Anderstorp to take a points

lead he would not surrender. He added two more wins to beat youth – in the form of 21-year-old Linus Ohlsson – to the crown.

Ohlsson caused a stir by beating Eklom to the first Karlskoga win, and passed Jocke Mangs's Citroen late at Tierp to take the title to a final-round showdown.

His chance of the championship effectively ended when he spun Thed Bjork on the return trip at Karlskoga and was given a

drive-through penalty.

By contrast, when Eklom was spun to last by Daniel Haglof on the streets of Gothenburg, he fought back to a superb fifth. Bjork's Volvo won on that day, while BMW duo Richard Goransson and Fredrik Larsson also tasted success in 2012.

The record books are likely to show Eklom as TTA's only champion; it's merging with the STCC and taking its name (although retaining the silhouette regulations) for next year.

**FINAL POSITIONS**

1 Fredrik Eklom (Volvo S60), 151; 2 Linus Ohlsson (Saab 9-3), 126; 3 Thed Bjork (Volvo), 121; 4 Fredrik Larsson (BMW SR), 85; 5 Robert Dahlgren (Volvo), 69; 6 Richard Goransson (BMW), 58; 7 Martin Ohlin (BMW), 45; 8 Alx Danielsson (Citroen C5), 43; 9 Tommy Rustad (Volvo), 42; 10 Daniel Haglof (Saab), 37.



Kristoffersson beat the Chevrolets

**SCANDINAVIAN TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP**

# JK rolling to twin titles

JOHAN KRISTOFFERSSON added to his Superstars and local Carrera Cup crowns by taking the Scandinavian Touring Car title.

The KMS Volkswagen driver won five times and held the lead for most of the year, but the 24-year-old fell behind Chevrolet's Rickard Rydell in the points when a front-wheel arm broke in the penultimate round at Knutstorp.

Undeterred, he dominated the Solvalla finale, winning twice and beating Rydell to glory by six points as the veteran took a pair of fourths on a track more suited to the characteristics of the turbocharged,

gas-powered Scirocco than those of his Cruze.

Rydell's team-mate Michel Nykjaer won five times and was ahead of Kristoffersson in the points heading into the last round, but a drive-through penalty for pushing Patrik Olsson's VW ended his hopes.

Olsson and Tomas Engstrom, who ran his own Honda Civic, also won races.

**FINAL POSITIONS**

1 Johan Kristoffersson (Volkswagen Scirocco CNG), 264; 2 Rickard Rydell (Chevrolet Cruze), 258; 3 Michel Nykjaer (Chevy), 231; 4 Patrik Olsson (VW), 183; 5 Tomas Engstrom (Honda Civic), 178; 6 Johan Stureson (VW), 167.



Volvo racer Eklom was triumphant

## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### ELMS

3 races, 2 winning cars

### QUICK RESULTS

- LMP2 Thiriet/Beche
- GTE Pro Cocker
- GTE Am Pons/Narac/Armindo
- LMPC Hartshorne

**SEASON RATING** Series provided the closest LMP2 racing in the world in 2012

★★★★☆

## WORLD OF SPORT SEASONAL SURVEYS

### EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

# Battle of the baby prototypes goes to TDS

**THE REBRANDED AND** remodelled European Le Mans Series staggered and stumbled through its first year minus LMP1 machinery.

Yet the absence of the top prototypes had nothing to do with the decline of a series that eventually ran to just three races.

LMP2 became the top category and more than filled the void left by

Pescarolo and Rebellion. P2 in the ELMS was more competitive than in the World Endurance Championship and produced some fascinating battles, as well as marking out some sportscar stars of the future.

One of those was Mathias Beche, who anchored the French TDS Racing squad's assault and ended up as champion together with

season-long co-driver Pierre Thiriet. Their ORECA-Nissan 03 came out ahead in a thrilling encounter at the Paul Ricard season opener and finished second at Donington Park.

Shortly after the British fixture in July, it was announced that the remaining two ELMS events would be cancelled and replaced by Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta, which would count for double points. Beche, Thiriet and prototype stalwart Christophe Tinseau were the first ELMS crew home in fourth place, which was more than enough to seal the title.

No one else managed to string together a coherent campaign, including runners-up Olivier Pla and Bertrand Baguette. The OAK

Racing duo missed Ricard, won at Donington and then lost any chance of beating TDS at Petit when the starter motor failed on their Morgan-Nissan LMP2 2012.

A thinly-supported GTE Pro division was won by Jonny Cocker (JMW Ferrari). ● Gary Watkins

### FINAL POSITIONS

**LMP2** 1 Pierre Thiriet/Mathias Beche (ORECA-Nissan 03), 94; 2 Bertrand Baguette/Olivier Pla (Morgan-Nissan LMP2), 62; 3 Jacques Nicolet (Morgan-Judd/Nissan), 54; 4 Christophe Tinseau (ORECA), 50; 5 Tom Kimber-Smith/Alex Brundle (Zytek-Nissan Z11SN), 48; 6 Alex Buncombe (Zytek), 30. **LMPC** John Hartshorne (ORECA-Chevrolet FLM09). **GTE Pro** Jonathan Cocker (Ferrari 458 Italia). **GTE Am** Nicolas Armindo/Anthony Pons/Raymond Narac (Porsche 911 GT3-RSR).

TDS car (leading) won LMP2 crown



## IN BRIEF

McLaughlin was victorious



### NZ V8 SUPERTOURERS

A practice crash ruled John McIntyre out of the final round at Ruapuna and allowed Scott McLaughlin to nab the title in his MPC Holden. Veteran Greg Murphy slipped by McIntyre for the runner-up spot.

### NEW ZEALAND V8s

Seven wins made Angus Fogg champion in his self-run Ford, with Jason Bargwanna's similar Tulloch-run machine his closest challenger. Tim Edgell was third.

### BRAZILIAN V8s

Caca Bueno won his fifth title in seven years as the Red Bull Chevrolet took three victories and fended off RC Chevy driver Ricardo Mauricio at the Interlagos finale. Atila Abreu was next up.

### ITALIAN F3

JD Mygale driver Riccardo Agostini's title remains provisional after Eddie Cheever (Prema) and the other Dallara drivers were excluded from the Monza finale over a dispute with the cars' rear crash structures.

### AUSTRALIAN F3

Britain's James Winslow won 13 times for R-Tek to clinch his second series title. Self-run Chris Gilmour finished second while Hayden Cooper took the National Class with BF Racing.

### GERMAN F3

Motopark/Lotus-run Swede Jimmy Eriksson won eight races and the title, beating Van Amersfoort Racing F3 rookie Lucas Auer. Britain's Tom Blomqvist won five times in a partial campaign with EuroInternational.

Eriksson took title



### AMERICAN LE MANS SERIES

# Corvette on top in fabulous ALMS GT fight

**CORVETTE RACING HAS LONG** been a force in the ALMS GT division, but it had more than enough strong opposition to spook it in 2012. Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner were title favourites for most of the year, and the team had its fingers crossed for a one-two via Jan Magnussen and Antonio Garcia.

The Extreme Speed Ferrari squad had other ideas though, with team boss Scott Sharp and Johannes van Overbeek combining for the win at the Petit Le Mans finale, and taking the championship runner-up spot in the process.

Spoils were shared during the season, with Rahal Letterman Lanigan getting the ageing BMW M3 onto the scoreboard with wins at Sebring and Road America, and the Walker and Flying Lizard teams both claiming

victories for Porsche. The other highlight of the season was the return of the factory Chryslers, with the SRT Viper GTS-R appearing from Mid-Ohio onwards.

The LMP1 entry was small this year, but you only need two cars to make a race. It remained close between the Pickett Racing HPD and Dyson Racing Lolas throughout the season, with the Klaus Graf and Lucas Luhr finally emerging victorious for the Pickett squad.

Christophe Bouchut and Scott Tucker owned LMP2 in their Level 5 HPD, with Conquest's Martin Plowman/David Heinemeier Hansson providing most of the resistance.

Alex Popow spearheaded a CORE Autosport 1-2-3 in LMPC, while Cooper MacNeil and Leh Keen delivered a GTC-class one-two for Alex Job Racing. ● Mark Glendenning



Corvette crew beat Porsche and Ferrari

### POINTS

**GT** 1 Oliver Gavin/Tommy Milner (Chevrolet Corvette C6.R), 146; 2 Scott Sharp/Johannes van Overbeek (Ferrari 458 Italia), 123; 3 Antonio Garcia/Jan Magnussen (Corvette), 121; 4 Dirk Muller (BMW M3 GT), 112; 5 Jorg Bergmeister/Pat Long (Porsche 911 GT3-RSR), 111; 6 Bill Auberlen/Jorg Muller (BMW), 107. **LMP1** 1 Lucas Luhr/Klaus Graf (HPD-Honda ARX-03a), 195; 2 Guy Smith/Chris Dyson (Lola-Mazda B12/60), 186; 3 Eric Lux (Lola-Mazda B11/66), 87.

**LMP2** 1 Scott Tucker/Christophe Bouchut (HPD ARX-03b), 196; 2 Martin Plowman/David Heinemeier Hansson (Morgan-Judd LMP2), 156; 3 Patrick Dempsey (Lola-Judd B12/87), 53. **LMPC (all drivers in ORECA-Chevrolet FLM09)** 1 Alex Popow, 185; 2 Jonathan Bennett/Colin Braun, 150; 3 Bruno Junqueira, 118. **GTC (all drivers in Porsche 911 GT3 Cup)** 1 Cooper MacNeil, 161; 2 Leh Keen, 141; 3 Spencer Pumpelly, 116.



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## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE SERIES

6 races, 5 winning cars

**QUICK RESULTS**  
→ Champions **Ortelli/Mies/Haase**  
→ Pro-Am **Machiels/Hommerson**  
→ Gents **Hissom/Hirschi**

## SEASON RATING

★★★★☆

Strong grids, a variety of winners and a major twist in the tail

## WORLD OF SPORT SEASONAL SURVEYS

### BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE SERIES

# Audi trio deny BMW men at finale

## WRT AUDI DRIVERS STEPHANE

Ortelli, Christophe Haase and Christopher Mies snatched the title from under the noses of the class act of the six-round championship, Maxime Martin, Bas Leinders and Markus Palttala in the lead Marc VDS BMW Z4, with second place at the Navarra finale enough to give the Audi trio the crown by just three points.

Their triumph was not without controversy, which is still on-going. Marc VDS protested the Audi R8 LMS ultra for pitstop irregularities and subsequently appealed to a Madrid court. The case has now been taken to the International Court of Appeal in Paris.

The BMW also had to come back from the one-lap penalty hung over from the previous race. Wet-weather

daredevil Martin brought the car up to fourth, only for his progress to be halted when the conditions became so bad (probably not for him) that the safety car was deployed and the race subsequently red-flagged.

Marc VDS started the season with back-to-back wins at Monza and Silverstone and a second place behind the eventual champions at Paul Ricard.

Another one-lap penalty left them fourth at the double-points Spa 24 Hours round, which was won by the Phoenix Audi line-up of Frank Stippler, Andrea Piccini and Rene Rast, and then their series lead all but disappeared when Palttala was punted out at the Nurburgring.

A distant third in the championship went to the ProSpeed Porsche trio of Marc Goossens, Xavier



Mies, Ortelli and Haase (l-r) celebrate

Maassen and Marc Hennerici, who won a thriller at the 'Ring.  
● Gary Watkins

## FINAL POSITIONS

1 Stéphane Ortelli/Christopher Haase/Christopher Mies (Audi R8 LMS ultra), 114; 2 Markus Palttala/Maxime Martin/Bas Leinders (BMW

Z4 GT3), 111; 3 Marc Hennerici/Xavier Maassen/Marc Goossens (Porsche 911 GT3-R), 72; 4 Andrea Piccini (Audi), 62; 5 Laurens Vanthoor/Edward Sandstrom (Audi), 59; 6 Frank Stippler (Audi), 59.

**Pro/Am Cup** Louis Machiels/Niek Hommerson (Ferrari 458 Italia).

**Gentlemen Trophy** Robert Hissom/Pierre Hirschi (Audi).

### FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP

# Vandoorne nicks title from Kvyat at the end

THE 2012 FORMULA RENAULT Eurocup field featured an impressive line-up, so it was surprising that the title fight was a two-horse race between Stoffel Vandoorne and Daniil Kvyat.

They won 11 of the 14 races between them, and over the penultimate weekend of the year at Paul

Ricard they moved more than 100 points clear of the nearest challenger.

The crown seemed to be Kvyat's to lose in the early rounds, as the Red Bull-backed Russian won three of the opening four races. By then his Josef Kaufmann Racing rival Vandoorne had found his

feet and made his way up to second. He would fall no lower for the rest of 2012. Vandoorne seized the top spot for the first time thanks to back-to-back wins at the Nurburgring, which coincided with Kvyat's worst weekend of the year: thanks to a crash he bagged just 10 points to his rival's 50 in Germany.

Koiranen driver Kvyat bounced back with two wins on home soil, and over the next four races the pair shared the victories, setting the scene for a bizarre finale.

Vandoorne took an 11-point lead to Barcelona, and he extended that to 14 in the first race, leading home Kvyat as both were beaten by Oscar Tunjo.

Changeable weather caused havoc in the finale a day later. Vandoorne, starting 16th after being caught out in qualifying, gambled on slicks at the

start. He then clashed with another car as he tried to slither around on a damp track. Kvyat – on wets – needed third to win the title, but a drive-through penalty (for not having tyres fitted in time pre-race) and a drying track left him powerless.

As Vandoorne was celebrating in the pits, 2011 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Oliver Rowland – another to gamble on slicks – took a well-deserved first victory to end a year full of misfortune with the honour of best of the rest in the standings.

● Glenn Freeman

## FINAL POSITIONS

1 Stoffel Vandoorne, 244; 2 Daniil Kvyat, 234; 3 Oliver Rowland, 109; 4 Norman Nato, 96; 5 Nyck de Vries, 78; 6 Paul-Loup Chatin, 77; 7 Oscar Tunjo, 73; 8 Melville McKee, 64; 9 Alex Riberas, 62; 10 Pierre Gasly, 49.



Vandoorne (yellow) duels with Kvyat

## IN BRIEF

### Hirakawa triumphed



## JAPANESE F3

RSS driver Ryo Hirakawa and TOM'S racer Yuichi Nakayama won five times each, but a greater number of podiums allowed Hirakawa to stay ahead. TOM'S-run Brit Richard Bradley was fourth.

## EUROPEAN F3 OPEN

Gianmarco Raimondo and Mans Grenhagen swapped the series lead for much of 2012, but neither won the title as RP driver Niccolò Schiro's late flurry of wins and podiums brought him to glory.

## SUD-AM F3

Fernando Rezende took Cesario Formula's fourth straight title despite missing two rounds. Andre Pedralli (Bassan) was second while Felipe Guimaraes was the class of the field when he appeared for Hitech.

## ADAC FORMEL MASTERS

A final-round treble gave Motopark/Lotus driver Marvin Kirchofer a last-ditch crown over Neuhauser Racing's Gustav Malja, who had led him into the finale.

## FORMULA RENAULT ALPS

Koiranen driver Daniil Kvyat made up for losing the Eurocup crown by winning the ALPS title, the Russian coming out on top in a final-round showdown with RC Formula's Norman Nato. Tech 1-run Paul-Loup Chatin was third.

## FORMULA RENAULT NEC

British drivers won nine of the 20 races with teenager Jake Dennis triumphing by a sizeable margin over Manor MP's Jordan King. Dennis's Fortec team-mate Josh Hill was third and won more races than anyone else.

### Dennis took title



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## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### V8 SUPERCARS

30 races, 4 winning cars

### QUICK RESULTS

- Champion **Jamie Whincup**
- Second **Craig Lowndes**
- Third **Mark Winterbottom**
- Team **Triple 8**

### SEASON RATING

★★★★☆☆

Few wanted to see such dominance. Plenty of good recovery drives though

## WORLD OF SPORT SEASONAL SURVEYS



FPR men chased Whincup all year

### AUSTRALIAN V8 SUPERCARS

# No stopping Whincup in Oz

**JAMIE WHINCUP WON HIS** fourth V8 Supercar title in the final year before the series' new Car of the Future rules are introduced.

The Triple 8 Holden driver played the points game early on, accruing podium after podium as Ford Performance Racing's Mark Winterbottom and Will Davison won nine of the first 11 races between them.

Not until a mid-season

run of 11 straight victories for Triple 8 did he take hold of the points race, only Winterbottom keeping the pressure on Whincup as the two-driver events at Sandown, Bathurst and Surfers Paradise passed.

Whincup's team-mate Craig Lowndes came alive at this point, winning five times, including a shared victory with Warren Luff at Sandown, and was able to

make it a one-two in the points for the team as Winterbottom's form dropped off late on.

FPR's only late-season wins came from Davison, who shared his Surfers success with Mika Salo. Whincup was the other victor that weekend, sharing with Sebastien Bourdais.

David Reynolds came closest to breaking the Triple 8/FPR stranglehold on wins.

Not only did he and Dean Canto miss out on victory at Bathurst to Whincup/Paul Dumbrell by just 0.3s, but he also led convincingly at both Phillip Island and Townsville, only for, respectively, a split fuel hose and slow wheel change from the Rod Nash Ford crew to ruin his hopes.

Tim Slade was another to string together a consistent set of results, netting fifth in the points after three podiums and a maiden pole position in his Rosenberg/Stone Bros Falcon.

Holden Racing Team had a dismal season, Garth Tander and James Courtney taking just six podiums all year.

### FINAL POSITIONS

1 Jamie Whincup (Holden Commodore VE II), 3861; 2 Craig Lowndes (Holden), 3522; 3 Mark Winterbottom (Ford Falcon FG), 3457; 4 Will Davison (Ford), 3049; 5 Tim Slade (Ford), 2790; 6 Shane van Gisbergen (Ford), 2554; 7 Garth Tander (Holden), 2462; 8 Lee Holdsworth (Ford), 2189; 9 David Reynolds (Ford), 2187; 10 James Courtney (Holden), 2153.

## IN BRIEF

### Hawksworth broke records



### STAR MAZDA

Brit Jack Hawksworth rewrote the record books by taking the title with eight wins and 10 poles with Team Pelfrey. GP3 refugee Gabby Chaves (JDC) and Sage Karam (Andretti) pushed him hardest.

### JK RACING ASIA SERIES

South African Aston Hare took a double win at the finale to snatch the title from long-time leader and EuroInternational team-mate Nabil Jeffri. Afiq Ikhwan Yazid and Aditya Patel also won races.

### TOYOTA RACING SERIES

Kiwi Nick Cassidy used his local knowledge to hold Giles Motorsport team-mate Hannes van Asseldonk in the points race. Brits Josh Hill and Jordan King were fourth and fifth respectively.

### ADAC GT MASTERS

Mercedes duo Sebastian Asch/Maxi Gotz beat Daniel Keilwitz/Diego Alessi (Callaway Corvette) to the title at the finale. Nick Tandy/Christian Engelhart won four times in their Porsche.

### INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

A three-car fight for the title was settled when three Ferraris allowed AF Corse's Gianmaria Bruni past on the last lap of the Barcelona finale, giving Bruni and Federico Leo the title. Nick Tandy/Marco Holzer (Manthey Porsche) were second.

### CARRERA CUP GERMANY

Rene Rast added to his Supercup crown by defeating British Tolimit team-mate Sean Edwards to the German title. Nicki Thiim, Kevin Estre, Norbert Siedler and Michael Christensen all won races.

### Rast won at home too



### PORSCHE SUPERCUP

# Fast Rast adds to vast haul of Porsche titles

**RENE RAST BECAME ONLY THE** second man to rack up a hat-trick of Porsche Supercup titles with a brilliant campaign in 2012.

The 26-year-old German was a consistent frontrunner during the first half of 2012, if not a regular race winner. Rast trailed Lechner Racing team-mate Norbert Siedler and Konrad Motorsport's Sean Edwards – who dominated on 'home' soil on the streets of Monaco – but found himself only three points off the series lead after the fourth race, in Valencia.

His best drive came at Silverstone, where he started the race on old tyres (having been stripped of the pole position he took on

fresh rubber for a yellow-flag infringement) and was able to hold off the freshly-shod Siedler and Edwards for the duration, the top three covered by just 0.6s at the finish.

After that he finished no lower than second in any of the races he started. He even opted to miss the Hungaroring races in order to jet off to Belgium on Saturday afternoon and win the Spa 24 Hours!

That decision could have meant double trouble as the Hungarian event included both its planned race and a replacement for the Barcelona round that was cancelled after problems were discovered with the structure of two cars'

wheels while the machines sat in the pre-race collecting area.

Rast's absence allowed Attempto Racing's Kevin Estre to take over the points lead as he took his first win of 2012, but a runner-up spot at Spa next time out – behind Estre's team-mate Nicki Thiim – got him back in front.

Once Edwards shot his own title chances at the Monza finale by spinning Siedler out of the lead (for which he would later



Rast emerged ahead of Estre at the finish

be disqualified), Rast – who had passed Estre at the Parabolica following an early mistake by the Frenchman – had a clear run to the title.

Can anybody stop him next year?

### FINAL POSITIONS

1 Rene Rast, 142; 2 Kevin Estre, 139; 3 Nicki Thiim, 123; 4 Norbert Siedler, 121; 5 Sean Edwards, 107; 6 Michael Ammermuller, 103; 7 Kuba Giermaziak, 99; 8 Christian Engelhart, 87; 9 Robert Lukas, 74; 10 Patryk Szczerbinski, 66.

**INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS**

**SUPER GT**  
8 races, 6 winning cars

**QUICK RESULTS**

- GT500 Quintarelli/  
Yanagida
- Team MoLa Racing
- GT300 Mineo/Yokomizo
- Team Team Taisan

**SEASON RATING** Fascinating to-and-fro title battle, but few top-notch races  
★★★★☆

**SUPER GT**

# Quintarelli leads Nissan to double

RONNIE QUINTARELLI AND Masataka Yanagida didn't manage a top-six finish during the first three races of 2012. But two wins and two further podiums in the last four races ensured that the Mola Nissan pairing landed back-to-back Super GT titles with a race to go.

Kohei Hirate and Yuji Tachikawa set the pace in the early races, the Cerumo Lexus duo winning the Okayama season opener thanks to a dramatic last-lap pass on Naoki Yamamoto, and then adding a second place at Sepang to reach the mid-point of the year leading the standings.

But Quintarelli and

Yanagida came good at the championship's blue-riband event, the Suzuka 1000Km in August, to bounce back from early contact with a lapped GT300 machine and win after tyre problems afflicted the Lexuses of Kazuya Oshima (Le Mans) and Loic Duval (TOM'S).

Second at Fuji and then victory at Autopolis – Yanagida barging Yuki Nakayama's Nakajima Honda off the road on the last lap as he capitalised on a mistake by his rival – made certain of the title. That meant that when Quintarelli charged from seventh to third by the pitstops at the Motegi finale, and then left



Mola duo (leading) defeated the rest

his co-driver to finish just 0.1s behind Hirate, it was simply for pride.

Carlo van Dam took his maiden series win at Sepang, sharing his Dome Honda with Takashi Kogure, while Joao Paulo de Oliveira/Tsugio Matsuda claimed victory at Fuji.

A disappointing 2012 for NISMO veteran Satoshi

Motoyama, this year paired with Michael Krumm, was summed up when he and de Oliveira took each other out at the first corner at Sugo while battling for the lead. The pair ended the season winless.

**FINAL POSITIONS**

1 Ronnie Quintarelli/Masataka Yanagida (Nissan GT-R), 93; 2 Kohei

Hirate/Yuji Tachikawa (Lexus SC430), 74; 3 Hiroaki Ishiura/Juichi Wakisaka (Lexus), 57; 4 Joao Paulo de Oliveira/Tsugio Matsuda (Nissan), 45; 5 Takuya Izawa/Naoki Yamamoto (Honda HSV-010), 43; 6 Carlo van Dam/Takashi Kogure (Honda); 7 Kazuki Nakajima (Lexus), 40; 8 Michael Krumm/Satoshi Motoyama (Nissan), 40; 9 Andre Couto/Seiji Ara (Lexus), 36; 10 Kazuya Oshima/Daisuke Ito (Lexus), 34.



Citroen switch helped Cronin

**BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP**

# Cronin's hat-trick

FEW EXPECTED THIS YEAR'S British Rally champion to start 2012 in a Renault Twingo R1... but Keith Cronin did and five rounds later he'd won a third title.

The Irishman switched to a Citroen DS3 R3 from round two in Wales and, once up to speed, was as quick as ever. He laid the foundations for his success with a Pirelli-Jim Clark-Northern Ireland hat-trick.

Fellow Citroen drivers Tom Cave (second) and Osian Pryce (third) gave chase through the season, with Cave taking a fine win at home in Wales and on the final round in Yorkshire, where he just denied Pryce

his maiden BRC success.

WRC Academy champion Elfyn Evans dominated his class in his R2 Fiesta, taking five perfect scores. It looked for a while as though the Welshman could be on for the outright title at the same time. Pirelli Star Driver Jukka Korhonen's hopes of troubling Evans for R2 glory were hit by prolonged car trouble in his Skoda Fabia.

● David Evans

**FINAL POSITIONS**

1 Keith Cronin (Renault Twingo R1/Citroen DS3 R3), 102; 2 Tom Cave (Citroen), 94; 3 Osian Pryce (Citroen), 87; 4 Elfyn Evans (Ford Fiesta R2), 78; 5 Jonny Greer (Citroen), 65; Matthew Cathcart (Ford), 61.

**INDY LIGHTS**

# Rookie Vautier beats veterans

HISTORY TELLS US THAT IT'S unwise to bet against Sam Schmidt Motorsports in Indy Lights, and with four entries in the 2012 field there seemed little reason for that to change.

Of Schmidt's quartet, most expected fourth-year driver Gustavo Yacaman or sophomore Esteban Guerrieri to lead the charge. Both were frontrunners, but it was rookie Tristan Vautier who took the title.

The reigning Star Mazda champion started his Lights

career with pole and victory in the season-opener at St Petersburg, and went on to claim another three wins. The Frenchman went into the finale at Fontana with enough of a points buffer over Guerrieri that he could afford to be conservative. Argentinian Guerrieri finished that race third, one place ahead of his rival, but it was not enough.

Schmidt's main rivalry came from the Andretti camp. Sebastian Saavedra (his entry again run with

AFS) returned to the series after a season in IndyCar and was the main threat. Saavedra remained a title contender until fairly late in the season – he qualified on pole for the final race, but his hopes of striking a final blow against Schmidt were blunted when his car suffered a mechanical problem on the grid, and he finished the season just behind Yacaman in fourth.

Saavedra's rookie team-mate Carlos Munoz overcame a rocky start to the year to pick up two victories and make it three Colombians in the top five.

● Mark Glendenning

**FINAL POSITIONS**

1 Tristan Vautier, 461; 2 Esteban Guerrieri, 453; 3 Gustavo Yacaman, 394; 4 Sebastian Saavedra, 383; 5 Carlos Munoz, 377; 6 Victor Carbone, 340; 7 Oli Webb, 310; 8 David Ostella, 298; 9 Juan Pablo Garcia, 260; 10 Jorge Goncalvez, 247.



Vautier defeated team-mate Guerrieri

## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### AUTO GP

14 races, 6 winners

### QUICK RESULTS

- **Champion Adrian Quaife-Hobbs**
- **Second Pal Varhaug**
- **Third Sergey Sirotkin**
- **Team Super Nova**

### SEASON RATING

★★★★☆☆

Good, but with a new car and no F2 or Italian F3 competition, '13 could be great

## WORLD OF SPORT SEASONAL SURVEYS

### AUTO GP WORLD SERIES

# Briton Quaife-Hobbs does the job in style

AFTER A NERVE-WRACKING winter pursuing a budget, GP3 race winner Adrian Quaife-Hobbs made a late call to race for Super Nova in Auto GP. The decision was rewarded with a record-breaking season.

Key to Quaife-Hobbs's year was an uncanny ability to choose the right set-up to maximise the use of the hard and soft-compound Kumho tyres that were on offer for the first time in 2012. The Briton's flair was reflected by five victories, and six pole positions from seven attempts. A stunning drive at the Hungaroring, where he won by 30 seconds in race one, and a double win at the Algarve circuit – a first for the series – were pivotal to his title charge.

Chief among his rivals was Sergey Sirotkin. The Russian teenager was assisted by an astute tyre choice to score victory at Valencia. But slow starts



Champ Quaife-Hobbs (leading) dominated

at Monza and Marrakech compromised the Euronova driver's final points tally, and runner-up honours instead fell to Pal Varhaug.

The Norwegian rebounded from a difficult GP2 season by producing several mature drives for Virtuosi UK, including a fine win at Sonoma. Cash-strapped 2011 Italian Formula 3 champion Sergio Campana was

involved in a thrilling wheel-to-wheel battle with Quaife-Hobbs to take victory at Marrakech.

The reversed-grid race in Morocco fell to Chris van der Drift, completing the Kiwi's valiant battle back to the cockpit following his monster Superleague crash at Brands Hatch in 2010.

Brazilian ex-F1 driver Antonio Pizzonia became the season's sixth different

winner when he romped to a sensational double on his maiden Auto GP appearance on home soil at Curitiba.

● Peter Mills

### FINAL POSITIONS

- 1 Adrian Quaife-Hobbs, 221;
- 2 Pal Varhaug, 183;
- 3 Sergey Sirotkin, 175;
- 4 Chris van der Drift, 127;
- 5 Daniel de Jong, 104;
- 6 Sergio Campana, 90;
- 7 Facu Regalia, 68;
- 8 Victor Guerin, 46;
- 9 Antonio Pizzonia, 45;
- 10 Antonio Spavone, 41.

### INTERCONTINENTAL RALLY CHALLENGE

# Mikkelsen takes title in disappointing year

ANDREAS MIKKELSEN DID what was expected of him when he became the first driver to make it two Intercontinental Rally Challenge crowns on the trot.

While his final points total suggested a dominant season, the Norwegian was the only frontrunner to tackle an expanded

programme. From his 10 starts he won just twice and failed, again, to triumph on asphalt, although that was not for the want of trying.

The Skoda UK driver was leading in the Canaries when a mechanical fault dropped him to second. He was fighting for first on the Circuit of Ireland when he

suffered concussion after crashing, but miraculously recovered to finish runner-up to Juho Hanninen. He made errors in Corsica and Ypres but was firmly in the hunt on the Targa Florio Rally when it was halted following Gareth Roberts's fatal accident. A spate of punctures then eluded him in the Czech Republic.

With Hanninen and works Skoda team-mate Jan Kopecky not entering the next two asphalt events, Mikkelsen was effectively champion by the time Giandomenico Basso won Rallye Sanremo in mid-October, his second victory in Ford's Fiesta RRC.

Mikkelsen returned for the Cyprus season finale, but punctures restricted him

to second behind Nasser Al-Attiyah's Ford.

Hanninen won three times in five appearances, while Kopecky finished runner-up for a fourth time, winning twice from six starts on the back of his best display in the IRC. Robert Consani and Briton Harry Hunt won the Production and 2WD titles respectively.

● David Evans

### FINAL POSITIONS

- 1 Andreas Mikkelsen (Skoda Fabia S2000), 168;
- 2 Jan Kopecky (Skoda), 101;
- 3 Juho Hanninen (Skoda), 93;
- 4 Sepp Wiegand (Skoda), 73;
- 5 Giandomenico Basso (Ford Fiesta RRC), 65;
- 6 Nasser Al-Attiyah (Ford), 50;
- 7 Yagiz Avci (Ford), 35;
- 8 Jarkko Nikara (Subaru Impreza R4), 34;
- 9 Robert Consani (Renault Megane RS), 32;
- 10 Toshi Arai (Subaru), 30.



Mikkelsen won tragic Targa Florio

## IN BRIEF

### Ferrari man Palma won



### SUPERSTARS GT SPRINT

Andrea Palma dominated proceedings for the Black Team squad, winning nine times in 14 races to beat fellow Ferrari man Mario Cordini. Maserati, Corvette and Audi machinery also won.

### EUROPEAN GT3

Heico-Gravity Charouz pair Maxi Buhk/Dominik Baumann won six races and the title in their Mercedes SLS GT3. Britain's Michael Lyons shared second with AF Corse Ferrari 458 co-driver Stefano Gai.

### VW SCIROCCO R-CUP

Swede Ola Nilsson dominated the season, winning eight of the 10 races for the gas-powered VWs. Dennis Trebing was second while guest driver Markus Winkelhock won at Lausitz.

### ASIA-PACIFIC RALLY

Former Subaru WRC driver Chris Atkinson went one better than in 2011 to take the title for the MRF Skoda team. Proton driver Alister McRae pushed him all the way to the final round in China.

### MIDDLE-EAST RALLY

Nasser Al-Attiyah, co-driven by Giovanni Bernacchini, bagged his eighth title thanks to three end-of-year wins in his M-Sport Ford Fiesta RRC. He overhauled early-season leader Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari (Mini S2000).

### EUROPEAN RALLY

Skoda driver Juho Hanninen made it three different titles in S2000 machinery by taking the ERC with four wins from the seven events he entered. Michal Solowow was second in his Peugeot.

### Hanninen won ERC



### ACCESS ALL AREAS

Porsche ice driving (Jan 5)  
Maserati experiences (Jan 19)  
Mercedes-Benz World (Feb 2)  
Following F1 testing (Feb 9)  
Darren Heath photo exhibition (Feb 16)  
Race Retro show (Feb 23)  
Heritage Motor Centre (Mar 1)  
Karting at Daytona (Mar 8)

### AUTOSPORT AWARDS

Voting form (Oct 25)  
Winners (Dec 6)

### AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL

Show preview, part 1 (Jan 5)  
Show preview, part 2 (Jan 12)  
Show round-up (Jan 19)

### BRITISH F3

- Marcus Simmons  
Season preview (Apr 5)  
Oulton Park (Apr 12)  
Monza (Apr 19)  
Pau (May 17)  
Rockingham (Jun 14)  
Brands Hatch (Jun 28)  
Norisring (Jul 5)  
Spa (Aug 2)  
Snetterton (Aug 9)  
Silverstone (Sep 13)  
Donington Park (Oct 4)  
Season review (Oct 18)

### BRITISH RALLY

Sunseeker (Mar 1-DE)  
Bulldog (Mar 29-DE)  
Pirelli (May 3-GL)  
Jim Clark (Jun 7-RC)  
Northern Ireland (Aug 23-RC)  
Yorkshire (Oct 4-RC)

### BTCC - Kevin Turner

Triple 8 back with MG (Feb 2)  
Gordon Shedden interview (Feb 23)  
Season preview (Mar 29)  
Brands Hatch (Apr 5)  
Donington Park (Apr 19)  
Thruxton (May 3-KT)  
Dave Newsham interview (May 24)  
Oulton Park (Jun 14)  
Croft (Jun 28)  
Snetterton (Aug 16)  
Knockhill (Aug 30)  
Mat Jackson interview (Sep 13)  
Rockingham (Sep 27)  
Silverstone (Oct 11)  
Brands Hatch (Oct 25)  
Season review (Nov 1)

### COVER STORY

Nico Rosberg: 0 wins, 108 starts and counting (Jan 5-JN/ES)  
Rallying back from the brink after chaotic week (Jan 12-DE)  
Ferrari lives up to radical vow (Jan 19-ES)  
Lotus: Kimi is ready for F1 (Jan 26-ES)  
Raikkonen says F1 decision was easy (Feb 2-ES)

F1 teams set for exhaust rumpus (Feb 9-ES)  
Has Ferrari gone too aggressive? (Feb 16-ES)  
Solving the problem of ugly F1 cars (Feb 23-ES)  
McLaren on Red Bull's tail (Mar 1-ES)  
Pressure on Ferrari as F1 heads into tightest season (Mar 8-JN)  
McLaren hopes hinge on Aussie qualifying (Mar 15-ES)  
More to come from McLaren (Mar 22-ES)  
Ferrari upgrades must deliver (Mar 29-ES)  
More F1 surprises to come (Apr 5-ES)  
Breakthrough crucial for Lotus (Apr 12-ES)  
Formula 1 risks Bahrain backlash (Apr 19-ES)  
F1 warned over Bahrain future (Apr 26-ES)  
Pirelli's F1 gamble paying off (May 3-ES)  
Ferrari pushes back its winning target (May 10-ES)

Williams win was not a fluke (May 17-ES)  
McLaren risks blowing it (May 24-ES)  
Di Resta heads McLaren list (May 31-ES)  
Kubica return may be outside of F1 (Jun 7-RCH)  
Has Hamilton lost control of his own future? (Jun 14-GF)  
No quick fix for Button (Jun 21-JN)  
Red Bull raises the bar in F1 (Jun 28)  
London GP plans unrealistic (Jul 5-ES)  
Silverstone promised fix (Jul 12-ES)  
Vettel's home GP challenge (Jul 19-ES)  
Red Bull triggers engine rules debate (Jul 26)  
Kimi title shot is realistic (Aug 2-ES)  
Racing's Olympic dream (Aug 9-ES)  
F1 TV figures holding up (Aug 16-ES)  
Newey: no-one will dominate after break (Aug 23-ES)

Why Lotus can be 'mighty' (Aug 30-ES)  
Grosjean ban a sign of FIA clampdown (Sep 6-ES)  
McLaren to up Hamilton bid (Sep 13-ES)  
Professor Sid Watkins 1928-2012 (Sep 20-STA)  
Lauda fires title warning to Ferrari (Sep 27-ES)  
Mercedes won't make Lewis wait for title shot (Oct 4-ES)  
Schumacher 'forced' to retire (Oct 11-ES)  
Can anyone stop Red Bull? (Oct 18-ES)  
Ferrari in big push to catch Red Bull (Oct 25-ES)  
Alonso confident of title victory (Nov 1-ES)  
Raikkonen ready for 2013 title tilt (Nov 8-ES)  
Red Bull wary of Brazil showdown (Nov 15-ES)

Showdown (Nov 22-ES)  
Newey: Vettel's titles not all about the cars (Nov 29-ES)  
The pass that was never in doubt (Dec 6-ES)  
Kubica on brink of full-time rally deal (Dec 13-DE)  
Haug: Schumacher was capable of more (Dec 20-27-ES)

### DTM - Jaime O'Leary

Season preview (Apr 26)  
Hockenheim (May 3)  
Lausitz (May 10)  
Brands Hatch (May 24)  
Spielberg (Jun 7)  
Norisring (Jul 5)  
Nurburgring (Aug 23)  
Zandvoort (Aug 30)  
Oschersleben (Sep 20)  
Valencia (Oct 4)  
Hockenheim (Oct 25)  
Season review (Nov 8)  
Mercedes' finishing school (Nov 29)  
Charly Lamm interview (Dec 6)

### EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES - Gary Watkins

Paul Ricard (Apr 5)  
Donington (Jul 19)

### F1 LAUNCHES

Red Bull RB8, Williams FW34, Caterham CTO1, Toro Rosso STR7, Lotus E20, Force India VJM05, Sauber C31, McLaren MP4-27, Ferrari F2012 (Feb 9)  
Mercedes MGP W03 (Feb 23)

### F2

Season preview/track test (Apr 12-BA)  
Silverstone (Apr 19-CB)  
Algarve (May 3-JNI)  
Nurburgring (May 31-AVL)  
Spa (Jun 28-JNI)  
Brands Hatch (Jul 19-AVDB)  
Hockenheim (Jul 26-JNI)  
Hungaroring (Sep 13-JNI)  
Monza (Oct 4-BE)  
Luciano Bacheta interview/season review (Oct 18-TM)

### F3 EURO SERIES

Hockenheim (May 3-JOL)  
Brands Hatch (May 24-JOL)  
Spielberg (Jun 7-JOL)  
Norisring (Jul 5-MS)  
Nurburgring (Aug 23-JOL)  
Zandvoort (Aug 30-JOL)  
Valencia (Oct 4-JOL)

### FORMULA RENAULT 3.5

- Glenn Freeman  
Season preview (May 3)  
Aragon (May 10)  
Monaco (May 31)  
Spa (Jun 7)  
Nurburgring (Jul 5)  
Moscow (Jul 19)  
Silverstone (Aug 30)  
Hungaroring (Sep 20)  
Paul Ricard (Oct 4)  
Barcelona (Oct 25)  
Season review (Nov 1)

### FROM THE ARCHIVE

Stirling Moss,

Nurburgring 1000Km 1960 (Jan 5)  
Jim Clark races and rallies Lotus Cortina (Jan 12)  
Warwick Banks on JYS, 1964 (Jan 19)  
Nigel Mansell, BTCC Donington 1998 (Jan 26)  
Jason Plato wins 2001 BTCC (Feb 2)  
Williams's 'Walrus' of 2004 (Feb 9)  
Peugeot wins 1984 1000 Lakes Rally (Feb 16)  
Tony Brooks wins 1955 Syracuse GP (Feb 23)  
German GP 1973: no Italians (Mar 1)  
Frank Williams' humble beginnings (Mar 8)  
Alain Prost wins 1979 Euro F3 title (Mar 15)  
Carlos Pace, Austrian GP 1973 (Mar 22)  
Holden in the BTCC (Mar 29)  
David Leslie, Thruxton BTCC, 1993 (Apr 5)  
Porsche's only F1 win, Rouen 1962 (Apr 12)  
South African GP at Kyalami, 1985 (Apr 19)

1983: four wins, four marques (Apr 26)  
Gilles Villeneuve: Atlantic star (May 3)  
Christian Danner, Pau F3000 1985 (May 10)  
Colin McRae wins Tour de Corse 1997 (May 17)  
Eliseo Salazar, Indy 500 2000 (May 24)  
Jim Rathmann, Indy 500 1960 (May 31)  
Salzburgring DTM, 1987 (Jun 7)  
Derek Bell, Le Mans 1982 (Jun 14)  
Jo Bonnier remembered (Jun 21)  
Johnny Herbert, European GP 1994 (Jun 28)  
ShellSport Ford Escort Challenge, 1976 (Jul 5)  
Toronto Indycar, 2001 (Jul 12)  
Dan Gurney wins in the BTCC, 1963 (Jul 19)  
Kenny Acheson, Brands Hatch WS-PC 1989 (Jul 26)  
John Surtees becomes a constructor, 1970 (Aug 2)  
Alain Prost and 'trophygate', Monza 1989 (Aug 9)  
Bobby Rahal, Cleveland Champ Car 1982 (Aug 16)  
Nissan wins Road Atlanta IMSA GTP 1988 (Aug 23)  
Michael Schumacher's F1 debut, Spa 1991 (Aug 30)  
Mario Andretti, Italian GP 1982 (Sep 6)  
Bruno Giacomelli, Pau Grand Prix 1978 (Sep 13)  
Mika Hakkinen's crash, Adelaide 1995 (Sep 20)  
Bryan Herta, Cleveland CART 1995 (Sep 27)  
Jim Walsh, Fford (Oct 4)  
Stefan Johansson, British F3 1979 (Oct 11)  
Paffett wins German F3 title 2002 (Oct 18)  
Greg Moore's last win, Miami 1999 (Oct 25)  
Cagliari F3000 (Nov 1)

Chevy Corvette's Le Mans debut 1960 (Nov 8)  
Cheever father-and-son Ferrari test (Nov 15)  
Zanardi v Vasser, 1997 (Nov 22)  
Stephane Petehansel, Dakar Rally 2004 (Nov 29)  
Schnitzer runs Toyota in DRM (Dec 6)  
Fittipaldi's first Fittipaldi podium, 1978 (Dec 13)  
Xmas GP, South Africa 1963 (Dec 20-27)

### GP2

James Calado interview (Feb 16-GF)  
Season preview (Mar 22-GF)  
Sepang (Mar 29-SA)  
Bahrain (Apr 26-SA)  
Bahrain (May 3)  
Barcelona (May 17-SA)  
Monaco (May 31-SA)  
Valencia (Jun 28-SA)  
Silverstone (Jul 12-SA)  
Hockenheim (Jul 26-SA)  
Hungaroring (Aug 2-SA)  
Spa (Sep 6-SA)  
Monza (Sep 13-SA)  
Singapore (Sep 27-SA)  
Season review (Oct 11-SA)

### GP3

Season preview (May 10-GF)  
Barcelona (May 17-SA)  
Monaco (May 31-SA)  
Valencia (Jun 28-SA)  
Silverstone (Jul 12-SA)  
Hockenheim (Jul 26-SA)  
Hungaroring (Aug 2-SA)  
Spa (Sep 6-SA)  
Monza (Sep 13-SA)  
Season review (Sep 27-SA)

### GRAND PRIX FEATURES

Nico Hulkenberg interview (Jan 5-ES)  
Paul di Resta interview (Jan 19-MG)  
Williams without Patrick Head (Jan 26-ES)  
F1 2012: rules unravelled (Feb 2)  
Charles Pic interview (Feb 2-GF)  
Kimi Raikkonen interview (Feb 16-ES)  
Ross Brawn interview (Feb 23-ES/GA)  
Rubens Barrichello interview (Feb 23-JN)  
Jules Bianchi interview (Feb 23-GF)  
Cockpit secrets (Mar 1-MH)  
Massa in the spotlight (Mar 1-TD)  
Season preview (Mar 8)  
Jenson Button: McLaren star (Mar 15-MH)  
What to watch for in Melbourne (Mar 15-ES)  
Red Bull's woes (Apr 5-MH)  
Ferrari crisis analysed (Apr 12-ES)  
Brembo brakes (Apr 12-AL)  
Sergio Perez interview (May 10-ES)  
Lewis Hamilton interview (May 24-ES)  
Why F1 2012 is so close (May 24-MH)

F1's missing millions (Jun 7-ES/DR)  
F1 2012's best car (Jun 21-MH)  
Mark Webber interview (Jul 19-MH)  
Pastor Maldonado interview (Aug 9-ES)  
Ferrari's fightback (Aug 9-ES)  
Mid-season technical review (Aug 9-GA)  
Kimi Raikkonen interview (Aug 30-ES)  
Romain Grosjean interview (Sep 20-ES)  
Kamui Kobayashi interview (Oct 18-ES)  
Jenson Button interview (Oct 25-ES)  
F1 in America: back for good? (Nov 15-ES)  
F1 in America: Andretti on Austin (Nov 15-MG)  
F1 in America: talent spotting (Nov 15-ES)  
Caterham's woes (Nov 29-ES)  
Triple champs rate Vettel (Dec 6-ES)  
F1 2012 season review (Dec 13)  
Schumacher on three-year return (Dec 20-27-MH)  
Alonso's heroic failure (Dec 20-27-ES)  
Perez: the McLaren move explained (Dec 20-27-AC)

### GRAND PRIX PREVIEWS + COULTHARD COLUMN

Australia (Mar 15)  
Malaysia (Mar 22)  
China (Apr 12)  
Bahrain (Apr 19)  
Spain (May 10)  
Monaco (May 17)  
Canada (Jun 7)  
Europe (Jun 21)  
Britain (Jul 5)  
Germany (Jul 19)  
Hungary (Jul 26)  
Belgium (Aug 30)  
Italy (Sep 6)  
Singapore (Sep 20)  
Japan (Oct 4)  
Korea (Oct 11)  
India (Oct 25)  
Abu Dhabi (Nov 1)  
USA (Nov 15)  
Brazil (Nov 22)

### GRAND PRIX REPORTS

- Mark Hughes  
Australia (Mar 22)  
Malaysia (Mar 29)  
China (Apr 19)  
Bahrain (Apr 26)  
Spain (May 17)  
Monaco (May 31)  
Canada (Jun 14)  
Europe (Jun 28)  
Britain (Jul 12)  
Germany (Jul 26)  
Hungary (Aug 2)  
Belgium (Sep 6)  
Italy (Sep 13)  
Singapore (Sep 27)  
Japan (Oct 11)  
Korea (Oct 18)  
India (Nov 1)  
Abu Dhabi (Nov 8)  
USA (Nov 22)  
Brazil (Nov 29)

### INDYCAR

Justin Wilson interview (Feb 16-SS)  
Series' new generation

(Feb 16-MG)  
Season preview (Mar 22-MG)  
St Petersburg (Mar 29-MG)  
Barber (Apr 5-MG)  
Long Beach (Apr 19-MG)  
Sao Paulo (May 3-MG)  
Indy 500 preview (May 24-MG)  
Indy 500 (May 31-MG)  
Detroit (Jun 7-MG)  
Texas (Jun 14-MG)  
Milwaukee (Jun 21-MG)  
Iowa (Jun 28-MG)  
Toronto (Jul 12-MG)  
Edmonton (Jul 26-MG)  
Mid-Ohio (Aug 9-MG)  
Sears Point (Aug 30-MG)  
Baltimore (Sep 6-MG)  
Fontana (Sep 20-MG)  
Season review (Nov 15-MG)

### INTRODUCING

Nick Percat (Mar 29)  
Melville McKee (May 31)  
Rafaelle Marciello (Jul 5)  
Mathias Beche (Jul 19)  
Daniil Kvyat (Sep 13)  
Matheo Tuscher (Sep 27)

### IRC

Season preview (Feb 23-DE)  
Azores (Mar 1-AP)  
Gran Canaria (Mar 22-GL)  
Circuit of Ireland (Apr 12-DE)  
Tour de Corse (May 17-GL)  
Targa Florio (Jun 21-GL)  
Ypres (Jun 28-GL)  
San Marino (Jul 12-GL)  
Romania (Jul 26-GL)  
Zlin (Sep 6-GL)  
Ukraine (Sep 20-GL)  
Bulgaria (Oct 4)  
Sanremo (Oct 18-GL)  
Cyprus (Nov 8-GL)

### MARK HUGHES COLUMN

Recalling Patrick Head's time in F1 (Jan 5)  
Making sure your face fits (Jan 12)  
Unravelling F1 paranoia (Jan 19)  
Can Williams bounce back? (Jan 26)  
New Pirellis won't aid overtaking (Feb 2)  
Ugly cars: a necessary evil (Feb 9)  
Romain Grosjean, part two (Feb 16)  
Why Jarno Trulli was dropped (Feb 23)  
Advantage-seeking secrets (Mar 1)  
Overcoming exhaust-blown diffusers (Mar 8)  
Ferrari's exhaust woes (Mar 15)  
McLaren v Red Bull (Mar 22)  
Mercedes success: an unintended consequence (Mar 29)  
Ferrari's Massa/Kubica dilemma (Apr 5)  
Merc's quest to unlock results (Apr 12)  
The Lotus name/rights saga (Apr 19)  
F1 in Bahrain: PR disaster (Apr 26)  
Tyres: the artificial truth (May 3)  
Hamilton's controlled

approach (May 10)  
Mercedes' F1 tug of love (May 17)  
Shock Monaco win is likely (May 24)  
Hamilton's contract dilemma (May 31)  
Downforce v tyre wear (Jun 7)  
The Vettel/Ferrari rumours continue (Jun 14)  
How will F1 engines sound in 2014 (Jun 21)  
The close-racing mystery continues (Jun 28)  
Aerodynamics: it's a dog's life (Jul 5)  
Jenson Button's form dip (Jul 12)  
Paul di Resta's career dilemma (Jul 19)  
McLaren's miniscule development dilemma (Jul 26)  
Tyre wear versus aero performance (Aug 2)  
Grosjean: a man transformed (Aug 9)  
Why FOTA appears on the wane (Aug 16)  
Why Alonso's not Ferrari's only trump card (Aug 23)  
Why F1 entertainment rules technology (Aug 30)  
Hamilton's bizarre behaviour (Sep 6)  
Translating Hamilton-speak (Sep 13)  
Sid Watkins' lasting legacy (Sep 20)  
Hamilton's driving does the talking (Sep 27)  
What next for Michael Schumacher? (Oct 4)  
Schumacher appears at peace over retirement (Oct 11)  
Grosjean: mind over matter (Oct 18)  
F1's financial-excess fall-out (Oct 25)  
Pirelli: 2013 plans (Nov 1)  
Suspicion and paranoia in Abu Dhabi (Nov 8)  
Vettel v Alonso: the title run-in (Nov 15)  
Has F1 won over America? (Nov 22)  
Analysing Vettel's third title (Nov 29)  
HRT appears dead, but who's next? (Dec 6)  
F1 2012 without the 'finger trouble' (Dec 13)  
Kazuyoshi Hoshino: forgotten ace (Dec 20-27)

**McLAREN AUTOSPORT BRDC AWARD**

Voting form (Sep 13)  
Selection process (Nov 29-KT)  
Oliver Rowland's prize F1 test (Dec 6-KT)

**MY SEASON**

Jack Hawksworth (Oct 4)  
Felix Serrales (Nov 8)  
Antonio Felix da Costa (Nov 15)  
Maxime Martin (Nov 22)  
Johan Kristoffersson (Nov 29)

**NASCAR**

Daytona 500 preview (Feb 23-CBJ)

Brad Keselowski interview (Apr 26-AVDB)

**NATIONAL FOCUS**

2011 new series rated (Jan 5)  
Mark Robinson interview (Jan 19)  
Rob Huff tries Time Attack (Jan 26-MG)  
Jonathan Adam interview (Feb 2-KT)  
Aaron Steele interview (Feb 9-AVDB)  
MSVR club focus (Feb 16-BA)  
Pomeroy Trophy at 60 (Feb 23-MP)  
Euro NASCAR test (Mar 1-BA)  
Series to watch in 2012 (Mar 22)  
British GT preview (Apr 5)  
British Fford preview (Apr 5)  
Caterham SP/300.R track test (Apr 26-BA)  
MSA top-brass in the spotlight (May 10)  
Lawrence Tomlinson interview (May 17-KT)  
Frank Sytner's racing return (May 24-TM)  
Smart 4Two Cup race (Jul 5-BA)  
Tony Dron retires (Jul 12-MP)  
Silverstone Classic Preview (Jul 19-KT)  
Jann Mardenborough interview (Aug 2-TM)  
FRenault BARC title fight (Aug 9-BA)  
F5000 at Silverstone Classic (Aug 23-BA)  
BMW Compact Cup (Oct 18-KT)  
British GT season review (Nov 8-BA)  
Caterham Roadsport series profile (Nov 8-GF)  
TOCA support season reviews (Nov 15-BA/MO)  
Single-seater season reviews (Nov 22-MO/BA)  
Walter Hayes Trophy (Nov 22-BA)  
Britcar season review (Nov 29-SW)  
European Rallycross/Hillclimb reviews (Nov 29-TWI/EW)  
Top-10 national/club drivers (Dec 6)  
Top-10 rivalries/cars (Dec 13)

**OBITUARIES**

Tony Shaw Sr (Jan 5)  
Gianpiero Moretti (Jan 19)  
Roberto Mieres (Feb 2)  
Francois Migault (Feb 2)  
Roger Dowson (Feb 9)  
Anders Kullang (Mar 8)  
Robert Fearnall (Mar 8)  
Selwyn Hayward (Mar 8)  
Alan Mann (Mar 29)  
Bill Stone (Apr 19)  
Les Leston (May 17)  
Carroll Shelby (May 17)  
Roy Salvadori (Jun 7)  
Paul Pietsch (Jun 21)  
Gareth Roberts (Jun 21)  
David Allan (Jul 12)  
Philippe Bugalski (Aug 16)  
Mike Hewland (Aug 23)  
Juliette Brindley (Sep 6)

Sid Watkins (Sep 20)  
John Fitch (Nov 8)

**RACE/RALLY OF MY LIFE**

Steve Soper, Macau Guia 1997 (Jan 5-HHF)  
Ray Mallock, Snetterton F5000 1976 (Jan 12-HHF)  
David Coulthard, French GP 2000 (Jan 19-CB)  
Jason Plato, Brands Hatch BTCC 2009 (Jan 26-HHF)  
Jean-Pierre Nicolas, Monte Carlo Rally 1978 (Feb 2-DE)  
Armin Hahne, Jaguar XJR-15, Spa 1991 (Feb 9-HHF)  
Takuma Sato, Japanese GP 2002 (Feb 16-MS)  
Jonathan Palmer, Monaco GP 1988 (Feb 23-KT)  
\*Ken Tyrrell, German GP 1968 (Mar 1)  
Davy Jones, Le Mans 1996 (Mar 8-JOL)  
Steve Nichols, Portuguese GP 1984 (Mar 15-HHF)  
Volker Weidler, Le Mans 1991 (Mar 22-GM)  
Mark Higgins, Manx Rally 1997 (Mar 29-HHF)  
Julian Bailey, San Marino GP 1991 (Apr 5-HHF)  
Mike Broad, London-Sydney 1977 (Apr 12-HHF)  
Guy Smith, Road America ALMS 2011 (Apr 19-HHF)  
Ricardo Zonta, Spa World GT1 2010 (Apr 26-AVDB)  
Vincenzo Sospiri, Pau F3000 1993 (May 3-PM)  
\*Richie Ginther, Monaco GP 1961 (May 10)  
Eric van de Poele, Spa 24 Hours 1987 (May 17-JOL)  
James Thompson, Valencia WTCC 2007 (May 24-HHF)  
\*Rodger Ward, Indy 500 1959 (May 31)  
Juan Fangio II, San Antonio IMSA 1990 (Jun 7-TW)  
Karl Wendlinger, Canadian GP 1992 (Jun 14-GM)  
Markku Alen, Rally Portugal 1981 (Jun 21-DE)  
Jacques Villeneuve, Indy 500 1995 (Jun 28-GF)  
Carlos Sainz, Sanremo Rally 1988 (Jul 5-JOL)  
Jarno Trulli, Monaco GP 2004 (Jul 12-GE)  
Alan Gow, Bathurst Sprint 1972 (Jul 19-HHF)  
David Kennedy, Surfers Paradise 100 1979 (Jul 26-HHF)  
\*Roy Salvadori, Goodwood Nine Hours 1952 (Aug 2)  
James Weaver, Fford Festival 1978 (Aug 9-AVDB)  
John Watson, Belgian GP 1982 (Aug 16-HHF)  
\*Derek Bell, Le Mans 24 Hours 1983 (Aug 23)  
Christian Danner, Pau F3000 1985 (Aug 30-ST)  
Patrick Tambay, Monte Carlo Rally 1973 (Sep 6-AH)  
John Cleland, Donington

BTCC 1998 (Sep 13-KT)  
Bruno Giacomelli, US GP 1980 (Sep 20-JOL)  
Jackie Stewart, Italian GP 1973 (Sep 27-TM)  
Adrian Fernandez, Motegi CART 1999 (Oct 4-SS)  
\*Al Holbert, Wentzville IMSA GT 1975 (Oct 11)  
Jimmy Vasser, Fontana CART 1998 (Oct 18-MG)  
Jan 'Flash' Nilsson, Monaco Spider Cup 1996 (Oct 25-AVDB)  
Stig Blomqvist, Swedish Rally 1983 (Nov 1-JOL)  
Erik Comas, Monza F3000 1990 (Nov 8-PM)  
Pierre Dieudonne, Snetterton British F3 1975 (Nov 15-SSM)  
Rickard Rydell, Macau GP 1992 (Nov 22-MS)  
Philippe Streiff, Brands Hatch F2 1984 (Nov 29-SSM)  
Darrell Waltrip, Talladega NASCAR 1977 (Dec 6-ST)  
Roberto Guerrero, Phoenix CART 1987 (Dec 13-SSM)  
William Woollard, RAC Rally 1985 (Dec 20-27-HHF)  
\*previously published

**SPECIAL FEATURES/REPORTS**

Stirling Moss celebration (Jan 5)  
Fastest laps in British Isles (Jan 5-MS)  
Dakar Rally update (Jan 5-DE)  
Jim Clark celebration (Jan 12)  
Jackie Stewart celebration (Jan 19)  
JK Racing Asia insight (Jan 19-MS)  
Nigel Mansell celebration (Jan 26)  
Oli Webb in the US (Feb 2-MG)  
Who needs a big 2012? (Feb 9)  
Georges Boillot (Feb 16-MH)  
ART: French superteam (Feb 16-GF)  
Motorsport in China (Feb 16-MG)  
Mercedes diamond jubilee (Feb 23)  
Brits to watch in 2012 (Feb 23)  
Alex Premat interview (Mar 1-GF)  
Daytona 500 (Mar 1-JI)  
1987 WTCC retrospective (Mar 1-GW)  
Danica Patrick interview (Mar 15-AVDB)  
Remembering Marcel Albers (Apr 19-AH)  
Gilles Villeneuve anniversary (May 3-MH)  
Nelson Piquet's 1987 crash (May 10-MD)  
Superstars come to Britain (May 17-AVL)  
Damon Hill races VW (May 24-CB)  
Nurburgring 24 Hours (May 24-GW)  
Goodwood FoS preview (Jun 21-MP)  
Goodwood FoS report (Jul 5-MP)

Sky Sports F1 at Silverstone (Jul 12-CB)  
Adrian Quaife-Hobbs interview (Jul 19-PM)  
F3 Masters (Jul 19-ST)  
1936 Olympic Rally (Jul 26-PF)  
F1 1982 revisited (Aug 16)  
Group C retro (Aug 23)  
Goodwood Revival preview (Sep 13-MP)  
Goodwood Revival (Sep 20-MP)  
Suzuka Special (Oct 4-ES/MD)  
Bathurst 1000 (Oct 11-PB)  
Alain Prost drives a Red Bull (Oct 25-GF)  
Surfers Paradise V8 Supercars (Oct 25-PB)  
Petit Le Mans (Oct 25-JI)  
Macau preview: Edoardo Mortara's lap (Nov 15-JOL)  
Macau preview: F3/WTCC form guide (Nov 15-MS/PM)  
Macau F3 GP (Nov 22-MS)  
MRF Challenge (Nov 29-AVDB)  
Steve Rider book extract (Dec 6)  
Superstars season review (Dec 6-AVL)  
Von Ryan Racing profile (Dec 6-MS)  
D'Ambrosio drives Senna's Lotus (Dec 20-27-GF)  
Top 50 drivers of 2012 (Dec 20-27)  
Zanardi's Olympic handbike (Dec 20-27-MG)  
F3 car v F3 bike (Dec 20-27-MS)  
Pics/staff memories of 2012 (Dec 20-27)  
World's worst circuits (Dec 20-27-GW)  
Christmas Quiz (Dec 20-27-HHF)  
Fastest laps of 2012 (Dec 20-27-MS)  
Euro NASCAR profile (Dec 20-27-ST)  
2012 champions' gallery (Dec 20-27)  
World of Sport review (Dec 20-27)

**SPORTSCARS**

ORECA in profile (Jan 19-GW)  
Daytona 24 Hours preview (Jan 26-GW)  
Daytona sportscars at 50 (Jan 26-GW)  
Toyota back at Le Mans (Feb 2-GW)  
Daytona 24 Hours (Feb 2-JI)  
Felipe Nasr interview (Feb 2-AVDB)  
Peugeot's pull-out (Feb 16-GW)  
Allan McNish interview (Apr 12-GW)  
Spa 24 Hours (Aug 2-GW)  
Tom Kristensen on Spa 24 Hours (Aug 2-GW)

**TRACK TESTS**

Porsche 911 GT3 R Hybrid (Jan 5-NT)  
Garrie Whittaker in BMW M3/Z4 (Jan 12-KT)  
Lamborghini Gallardo

Super Trofeo (Feb 2-BA)  
Dallara T12 FR 3.5 - Oliver Rowland (Mar 1-PM)  
1950s sportscars (Mar 15-BA)  
TTA Volvo S60 (Nov 22-AVDB)  
Andy Priaux tests BMW M Cars (Dec 6-JOL)

**WEC - Gary Watkins**

Season preview (Mar 15)  
Sebring 12 Hours (Mar 22)  
Spa (May 10)  
Le Mans 24 Hours (Jun 21)  
Silverstone (Aug 30)  
Interlagos (Sep 20)  
Bahrain (Oct 4)  
Fuji (Oct 18)  
Shanghai (Nov 1)  
Season review (Nov 8)

**WORLD GT1**

Season preview (Apr 5-GW)  
Nogaro (Apr 12-CG)  
Zolder (Apr 26-GW)  
Navarra (May 31-JNI)  
Slovakia (Jun 14-GW)  
Algarve (Jul 12-GW)  
Slovakia (Aug 23-DL)  
Moscow (Sep 6-JNI)  
Nurburgring (Sep 27-GW)  
Donington Park (Oct 4-CB)  
Season review (Nov 15-GW)  
Series demise (Nov 29-GW)

**WRC - David Evans**

Season preview (Jan 12)  
Monte Carlo (Jan 26)  
Sebastien Ogier interview (Feb 2)  
The next generation (Feb 9)  
Sweden (Feb 16)  
Mexico (Mar 15)  
Portugal (Apr 5)  
Argentina (May 3)  
Greece (May 31)  
New Zealand (Jun 28)  
VW Polo R WRC update (Jul 19)  
WRC reaches 500 events (Aug 2)  
Finland (Aug 9)  
Germany (Aug 30)  
Rally GB preview (Sep 13)  
Great Britain (Sep 20)  
France (Oct 11)  
Italy (Oct 25)  
What next for the WRC? (Oct 25)  
Spain (Nov 15)  
Season review (Nov 29)

**WTCC**

Season preview (Mar 1-PM)  
Monza (Mar 15-PM)  
Valencia (Apr 5-PM)  
Marakkech (Apr 19-PM)  
Slovakia Ring (May 3-PM)  
Hungaroring (May 10-PM)  
Salzburgring (May 24-JS)  
Algarve (Jun 7-PM)  
Curitiba (Jul 26-PM)  
Sonoma (Sep 27-PM)  
Suzuka (Oct 25-PM)  
Shanghai (Nov 8-PM)  
Macau (Nov 22-PM)  
Season review (Dec 6-PM)

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MARK

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HA! LAST TIME FOR A LONG TIME LEWIS!

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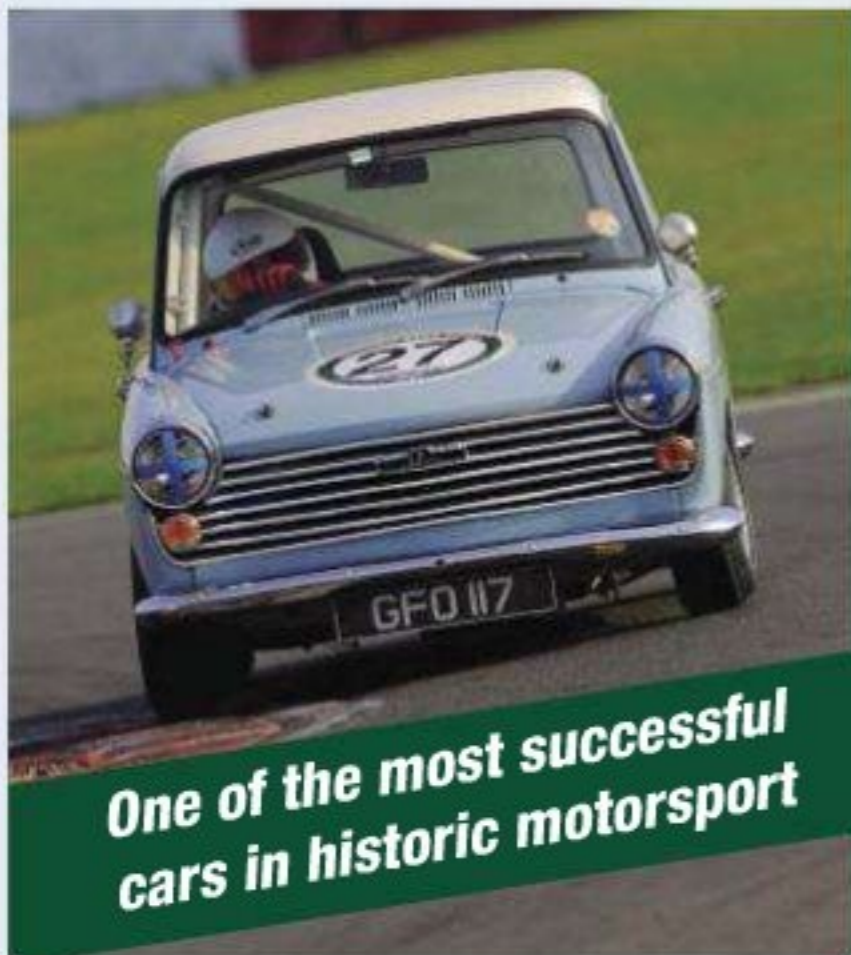
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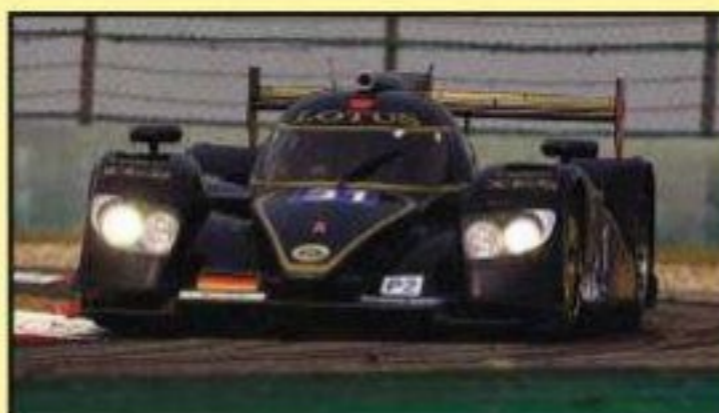
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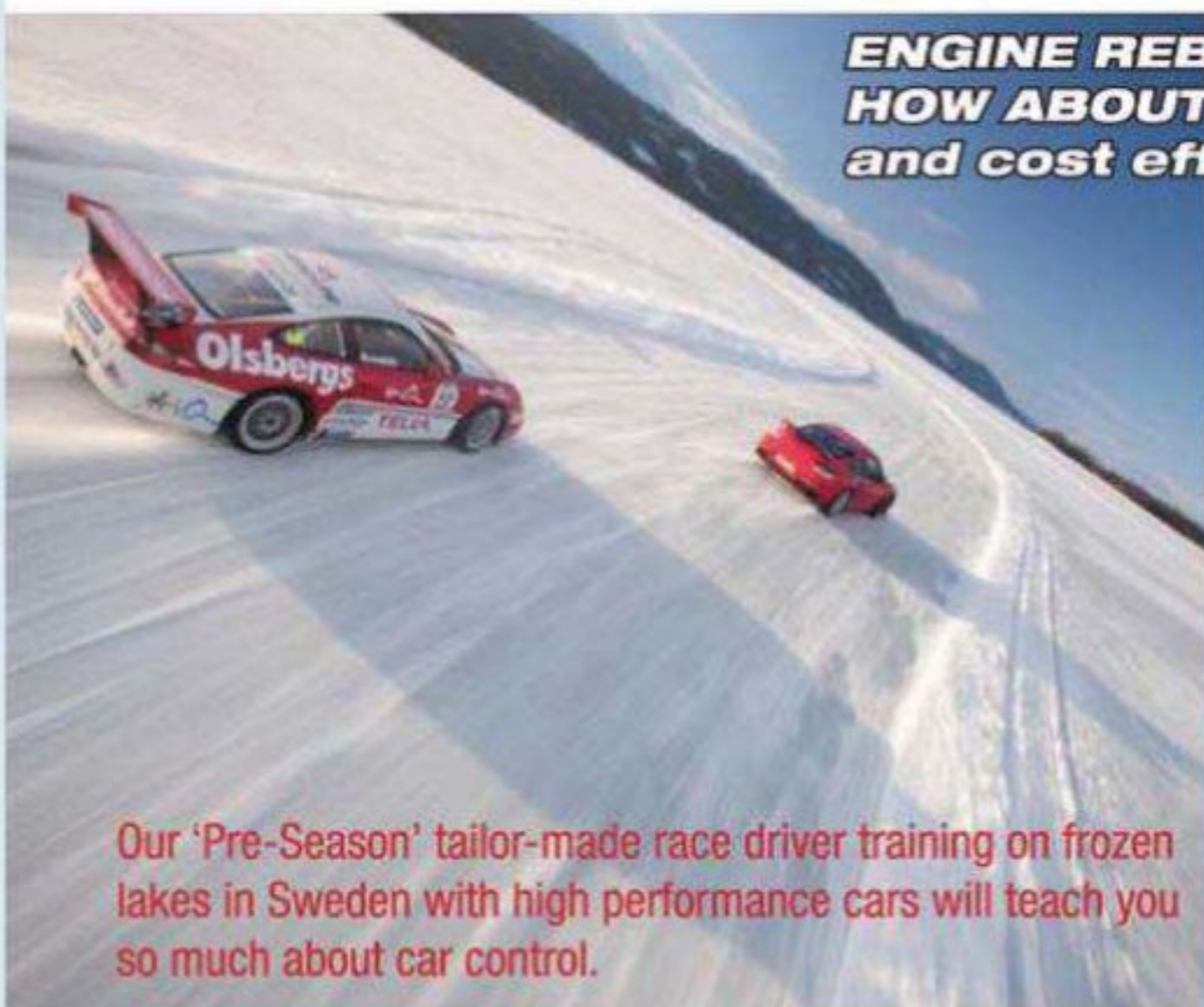
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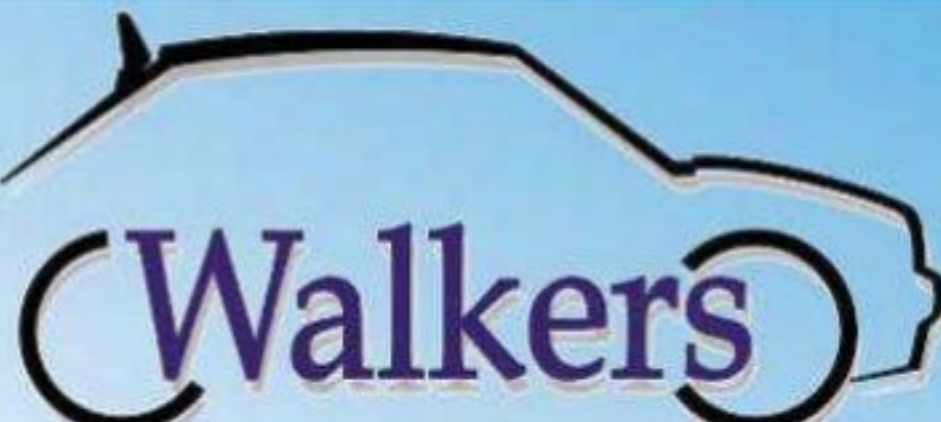
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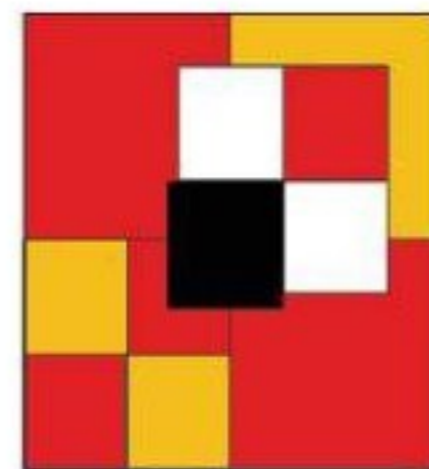
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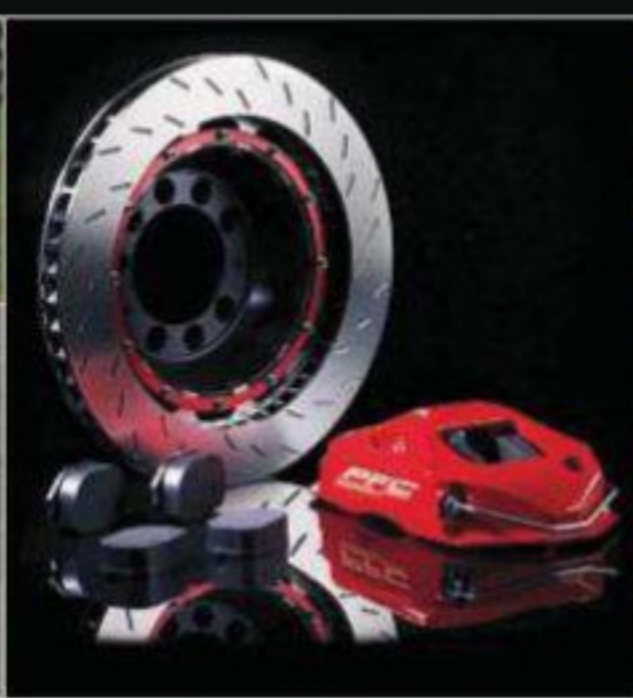
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L-R: Commercial director Matt Kelly with Harrison and Mowle

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**BEN ANDERSON**  
NATIONAL  
EDITOR

ben.anderson  
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### JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT

couldn't get any better, British GT finds another way to get stronger.

That teams of the calibre of Triple Eight and Fortec are jumping on the British GT bandwagon for 2013 is another huge coup for the series.

British GT already has a strong core of GT3 teams that have thrived as the championship has grown over the past season or two.

They will now go up against the most successful team in British Touring Cars, one of Britain's very best junior single-seater squads (which can boast success in Formula Renault 2.0, Formula 3 and Formula Renault 3.5), and the best Ferrari squad in the world (AF Corse), which confirmed last month that it will be joining British GT with a pair of 458s.

The BMW Z4 was a strong contender when the Barwell-run Ecurie Ecosse team ran a 2011-spec version in '12, and there's every reason to expect the latest car to be a real contender next year with Triple Eight's engineering prowess powering 888Optimum.

Mercedes has taken titles in FIA GT1 and GT3 this year, but has been under-represented in British GT thus far. The SLS is always a wonderful sight to behold on the track and it will be great to see two more thundering around alongside the Pyro-run Jones car.

Such a high calibre of teams is bound to attract more good drivers to the series, and will only add to the feeling that GT3 racing is the place to be in British motorsport right now.

### Extra contact details

**Kevin Turner**, features editor  
kevin.turner@haymarket.com

## Triple Eight and Fortec to GT

British Touring Car giant to run a pair of BMW Z4 GT3s next year as UK single-seater powerhouse plots Mercedes SLS assault

» **TOP BTCC TEAM TRIPLE** Eight will partner with GT squad Optimum Motorsport to contest British GT in 2013.

888Optimum, as the team will be known, will run a pair of new BMW Z4 GT3 cars from Triple Eight's base in Greatworth, Northamptonshire.

Joe Osborne, who won two races in a Trackspeed Porsche in 2012, will share the team's first entry with Optimum owner and Ginetta racer Lee Mowle. Osborne's 2012 co-driver Steve Tandy will share the second car with Dan Brown, a race winner in British GT in '09 and '10.

Triple Eight boss Ian Harrison said: "This is the kind of project we have been trying to get started for a few years now and it's satisfying to be finally going into it at this high level."

"Obviously Triple Eight is new to GT racing and we do not underestimate the steep learning curve that stands in front of us. But

with Optimum's experience, we have an opportunity to develop the team quickly from the start."

**FORTEC: BLANCPAIN AND BGT** Single-seater powerhouse Fortec will run two Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3s in the Blancpain Endurance Series and British GT in 2013.

No drivers have yet been signed but the team, which has close links to Mercedes through its F3 programme, will be run by Trevor Foster, who last worked with Fortec in F3 in 1995 before moving to Jordan Grand Prix.

Fortec boss Richard Dutton said: "It came about when one of my old single-seater drivers said I should do GT racing, because then he could have stayed at the team!"

"The idea has built from there. Mercedes asked if we wanted to do something with the GT project. It's a customer deal, but we have a very long relationship with Merc."

### TRACKSPEED RETURNS

Successful British GT squad Trackspeed plans to run three Porsche 997 GT3 Rs in the series again next season.

The Surrey team will retain Demon Tweaks boss Jon Minshaw, while Phil Keen will share the car after replacing 1992 BTCC champion Tim Harvey as Minshaw's co-driver.

No drivers have been confirmed for the other two entries, but 2010 champion David Ashburn, who finished second in the '12 title race with Trackspeed, will not return after announcing his retirement.

Meanwhile, former Ginetta G40 frontrunner Richard Sykes will drive for the Ginetta works team.

Sykes, who has raced a historic Ford Mustang and a Radical SR8 with Charlie Kemp in 2012, will share a G55 with marque boss Lawrence Tomlinson, and works driver Mike Simpson when Tomlinson is absent.

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2012 CHAMPIONS



Renault Clio Cup

# BARC to run budget Clio series

New category launched for 'out-going' Clio Cup machines and adapted road cars

Retired Clio Cup cars will have a new home in 2014

**THE BARC WILL RUN** a new club series for Renault Clios in 2013.

The Michelin Clio Cup Series with Protyre will run across four events next year, with the aim of becoming a fully-fledged championship in 2014.

It will run alongside the rebranded Protyre Formula Renault Championship (nee Formula Renault BARC) and is expected to incorporate races at Snetterton, Croft,

Rockingham and Brands Hatch.

The series will provide a new home for current Renault Clio Cup cars when a new 1.6-litre turbo version replaces them in the BTCC support category for 2014.

It will be run on Michelin road tyres, and drivers of roadgoing 197 and 200 Clios will be offered a conversion kit for £3000.

These cars will run in a separate 'Road' class, while drivers will be

split into 'Expert' (for those with prior race experience) and 'Sport' (for novices) categories.

Team Pyro's Mark Hunt and Scuderia Vittoria's Danny Buxton, two of the lead pioneers behind the series, are both confident there is a strong market for the new category.

"In the current climate it's exactly the sort of thing that's needed," said Hunt. "It'll be a great stepping stone and, more importantly, it means

we're not throwing away 25 very good Clio Cup cars.

"I see it as being like Formula Renault BARC – we've all seen how successful that's been for people who can't afford the bigger budgets."

Buxton, the 2001 Renault Clio Cup champion, added: "I think there will be a very strong market for this series. The conversion kit really opens it up to people who thought racing was out of their price bracket."

## Ginetta GT Supercup

### Hillspeed targets G55 expansion

**LEADING GINETTA JUNIOR SQUAD** Hillspeed intends to expand into the marque's GT Supercup next season.

Richard Ollerenshaw's team ran top rookie Pepe Massot in Ginetta Junior in 2012. He tested Ginetta G55 machinery with Nathan Freke's Century Motorsport squad and also had a run with Hillspeed's Formula Renault BARC arm recently.

Ollerenshaw said: "We've had some strong enquiries from top-line drivers and, given the success we've enjoyed in every other category we've competed in, it makes perfect sense to add Supercup to our plans."

Meanwhile, former Caterham R300



Hillspeed plans to join 2013 GT Supercup grid

champion Jamie Orton will return to the GT Supercup for a title tilt in 2013.

Orton, who finished 10th in the Supercup in 2012, will switch to JHR from the Total Control Racing squad that ran Carl Breeze to the title.

Orton said: "JHR had a very quick car in 2012 and they are very passionate. I really like their enthusiasm and their ethos as a team."

## Toyota Racing Series

### Mardenborough to single-seaters

**BRITISH GT RACE WINNER JANN** Mardenborough will contest the Toyota Racing Series this winter.

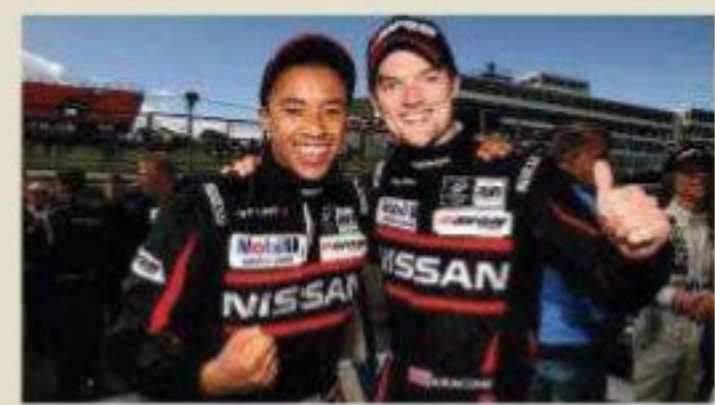
The PlayStation GT Academy graduate, who nearly won the British GT title in his first full season of racing this year, will make his single-seater race debut in TRS.

The Welshman will drive for ETEC Motorsport, alongside Thai racer Tanart Sathienthirakul and European F3 Open racer Tatiana Calderon.

European karting ace Dennis Olsen, 16, who tested Formula Renault BARC machinery with MGR recently, will become the first Norwegian to contest the series,

while Formula Renault NEC frontrunner Steijn Schothorst will also take part.

They join a field that includes 2012 champion Nick Cassidy, British F3 title contender Felix Serralles, and Serralles's 2012 Fortec team-mates Alex Lynn and Pipo Derani.



Mardenborough (left) is off Down Under

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**KX Akademy**

## KX Akademy backs five drivers for Clios and Ginetta Supercup

**THE KX AKADEMY HAS CHOSEN** the first five drivers it will help fund next season.

Renault Clio Cup racers Stefan Hodgetts and Ant Whorton-Eales, plus Ma5da MX5 Cup champion Luke Herbert will all contest next year's Clio Cup with KX support.

The trio will all drive for Scuderia Vittoria, which ran 2012 KX driver Hodgetts to four race wins in a part-season this year.

Team boss Danny Buxton said: "We've got a really good mix of drivers.



Hodgetts is one of three KX men in Clios

Stefan is back with the experience and he's absolutely the championship favourite in my eyes, Ant is incredibly fast and young, and Luke has come from club racing but is a champion and has an amazing mentality.

"The idea is to create what Team Pyro had last year - three guys all battling to be at the front. They will all push each other like you wouldn't believe. We've worked hard for this and the guys from KX are really excited as well."

Former Ginetta Junior and G50 Cup champion Tom Ingram and Lotus Elise ace Rob Boston will both also receive KX Akademy backing in 2013.

Both are set to race G55s in the Ginetta GT Supercup, most likely with the JHR team that ran Ingram to third in the championship this year as a KX-backed driver. KX has not ruled out backing at least one other driver on the TOCA bill in 2013.



### 'Slicks-and-wings' Formula Ford makes circuit debut

McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Jake Dennis sampled the new Formula Ford 200 at Silverstone last week. FF1600 ace Neil Winn, Ginetta Jr star Sennan Fielding and Radical ace James Abbott also drove.

**VW Racing Cup**

## Fulbrook to forsake Bora for Golf

**DOUBLE VW RACING CUP**

champion Joe Fulbrook will partner 2012's leading race winner Aaron Mason in next year's championship.

Fulbrook will swap the trusty Bora he first campaigned in the series in 2005 for a Mk5 Golf GTI.

The duo will race Golfs for the AWM Racing squad, alongside Robin Riley's Scirocco and the Golfs of Simon Andrews and Simon Tomlinson.

Fulbrook, who hopes to rent his rebuilt Bora to another driver, said: "Aaron and I have been sharing data for a couple of seasons and it makes sense now to share the same team personnel.

"Aaron is super-quick but like me needs more reliability. I have never

raced anything else but the Bora, so it will all be new for me - like being a novice again."

Mason added: "We will work closely with Joe, run the same suspension and bounce ideas off each other. There is still some time to come from the car."



Fulbrook has enjoyed many wins in his Bora

MARCUS PYE

# HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing



British GT produced photogenic grids

**H**aving worked at race meetings from Donington Park to Imola, and kept abreast of other disciplines, I've ruminated on 2012 to compile my 15th Old MAWP's Almanac, aka 'Not the AUTOSPORT Awards'. Cue fanfare for nominal 'prizes' in strata overlooked at the Grosvenor House earlier this month.

**Outstanding Performance**

Trevor Willis's sensational MSA British Hillclimb Championship victory stemmed an astonishing run of 14 titles for Gould drivers. OMS-Powertec 25 driver Willis's defeat of triple champ Scott Moran also landed a coveted maiden prize for Steve and Lynn Owen, founders of York-based OMS Racing, who crafted their first cars in 1985 and have now made more than 130.

**Greatest Comeback**

Formula Renault BARC. FRenault UK's cancellation was the making of its BARC-run cousin for older rolling stock. Great cars, top teams and fine racing - and at an accessible price - resulted in a scintillating title race, over which perennially underfinanced FFord champ Scott Malvern pipped younger hotshoes.

**Most Photogenic Grid**

With hairy McLaren MP4/12C, Audi R8 LMS, Ferrari 458 Italia, Mercedes-Benz SLS, Porsche 997 GT3 R, Aston Martin Vantage, Lamborghini LP600+, BMW Z4 GT3, Nissan GT-R GT3, Chevrolet

Corvette and Ginetta G55 hardware, plus assorted other marques playing, British GT was peerless.

**Old Favourites Never Die**

That none of its successors hold a candle to venerable FF1600 was proven yet again by November's Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone. No dicing is as close, no training ground better. Festival RIP (alas)!

**Most Improved Historic Racer**

Nick Fennell. The former Chinese motorcycle racing champion made a breakthrough in his Classic Team Lotus-run 25 F1 car. Hot on the heels of his first wins at the Silverstone Classic, Fennell made experienced team-mate Andy Middlehurst sweat for victory at Goodwood.

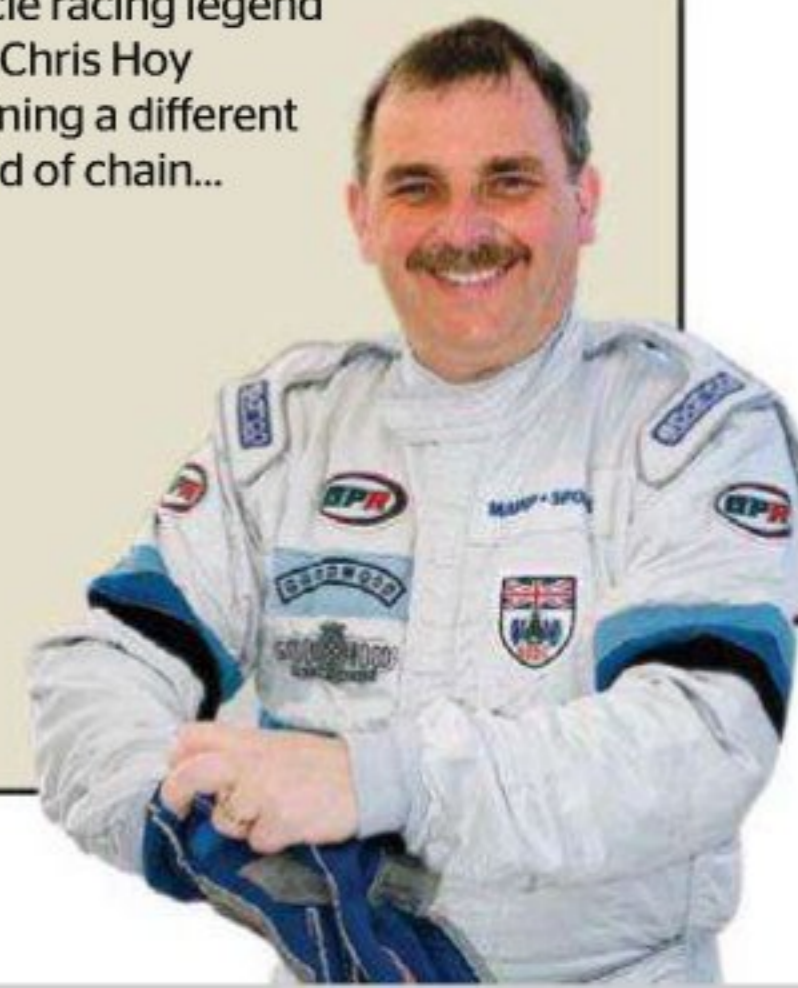
**Best New Event**

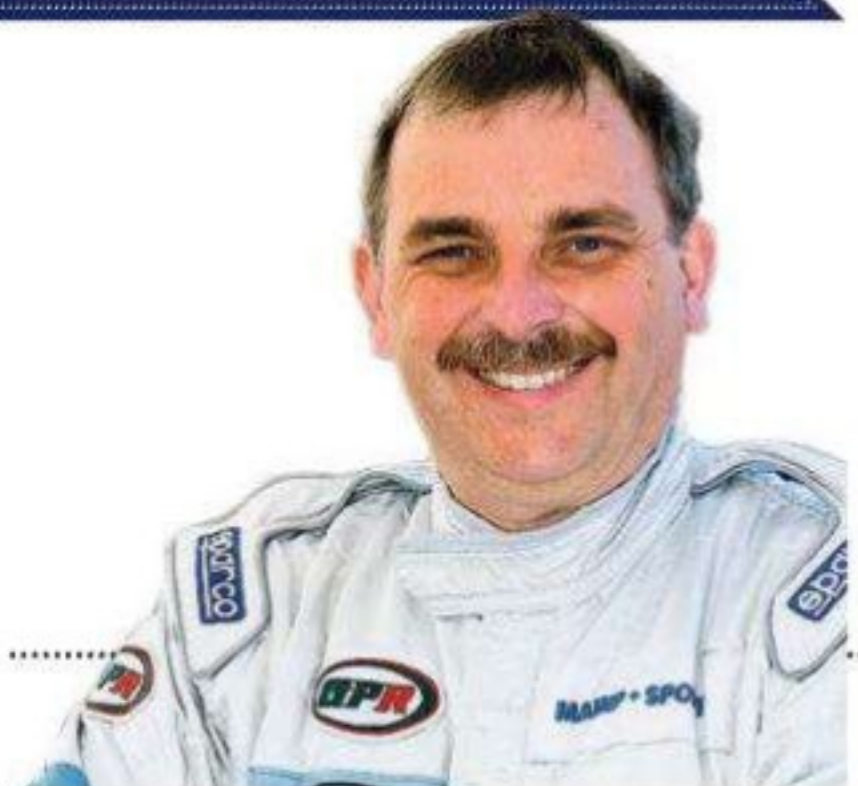
Zandvoort's Historic Grand Prix festival featured emotive cars - and local hero Jan Lammers - battling on the brilliant Dutch rollercoaster ride. That 30,000-plus spectators enjoyed it left circuit management overjoyed. Don't miss the sequel on August 31-September 1 2013.

**Ones to Watch in 2013**

Jake Dennis, 17, continuing his rapid rise; BRDC F4; Historic F2 heading a proper Easter meet for Thruxton's 45th anniversary; Goodwood's 20th Festival of Speed; Radical's RXC coupe and SR1 series, with cycle racing legend Sir Chris Hoy turning a different kind of chain...

Trevor Willis's British Hillclimb victory stemmed an astonishing run of 14 titles for Gould drivers"





# Marcus Pye

## 2012: it's a wrap!

AUTOSPORT's voice of club motor racing

**Marcus Pye saw a wide variety of action in 2012. Here he takes a look back at his 2012 highlights**

**O**ver an inexorably busy but hugely enjoyable 2012 season I've attended 26 events at 14 venues and

crossed the English Channel to five continental countries in the course of my AUTOSPORT duties.

While I've seen some great racing, for contemporary and historic cars, I'm conscious that fixture clashes have precluded me from visiting other places on my wish list, so I've had to keep tabs on some others from afar. As a wrap-up, here are a few of the elements that have coloured my year.

### McLAREN AUTOSPORT BRDC AWARD

Jake Dennis's triumph is out, but the battle for the £100,000 prize, McLaren F1 test drive and BRDC membership was an epic. Five Formula Renault racers - Dennis the Northern European champion - and the US Star Mazda champ were the closest-matched sextet in the competition's history.

As a group they also performed at the highest level seen to date as they

**“Aged 17, Dennis - who still didn't drive on the road - showed ice-cool confidence in each discipline”**

fought every second of the way for the potentially career-changing prize in (the usual) bitterly cold conditions on Silverstone's International Circuit in November.

Each of the six young drivers made a credible case for himself in the fleet of F2 cars and, while some looked more comfortable in the raucous Mercedes-Benz DTM car and fabulous McLaren MP4/12C GT3 than others, 17-year-old Dennis - who still didn't drive on the road - asserted himself in pole position with ice-cool confidence in each discipline.

Next year's Award winner will be the 25th. It doesn't seem almost that long since I rang AUTOSPORT colleagues from Thruxton raving about a lad named Coulthard who had impressed mightily on his first Formula Ford test.

### RADICAL RACING

I've followed the rise and rise of Radical Sportscars since its inception in 1997, driven most of the models and raced Clubsport, SR3 RS and SR8 machinery, so I have a strong interest in what is now the world's largest mass producer of bespoke racing cars.

Phil Abbott, designer Nick Walford and their team have built a wonderful brand that lives up to its name and continues to surprise and excite with every development. I can't wait to see the all-new RXC supercar - for road or race use - to be launched at AUTOSPORT International in January.

This year's racing has been terrific, with five points separating the top four in the Dunlop UK Cup endurance series. While Colin Noble returned to the top of the tree in the Supersports division, Tony Wells, James Littlejohn and 2010 750MC [Toyota] MR2 champion Zac Chapman were barely separable in the Masters class.

Next season the Radical racing ladder welcomes the new SR1 to the fold. If it's half as much fun as the original 1100cc Kawasaki-engined Clubsport, punters

Dennis won tight battle for MABA



1-litre 'screamers' impressed at Croft



**“More standalone races in 2013 should further enhance 1000cc F3’s profile”**

should be beating a path to Peterborough this winter.

**1000cc FORMULA 3**

Formula 3's 'screamer' class of 1964-70, FJunior's successor as the hotbed for aspiring F1 drivers to hone their talents, is fondly remembered to have produced the best racing ever. Well, by those of us old enough...

Keen spatial awareness and big balls were required to slipstream through

squabbling packs of cars. Ronnie Peterson, Tim Schenken, Emerson Fittipaldi, Carlos Pace and Tony Trimmer were among the era's later champions.

Now, after several half-baked starts - the Monaco GP Historique race was a massive fillip in 2010, but owners were gutted when the ACM dropped it this term - the 1000cc class is set to really take off again.

Sadly, I missed April's Justin Haler Trophy race (named for AUTOSPORT's

period F3 reporter) at Cadwell Park, but did catch up with the cosmopolitan group at Croft. They impressed, as I recall them doing at Silverstone's 1967 British GP meeting, where Charles Lucas (Lotus 41) pipped Tony Lanfranchi (Merlyn Mk10) in a typical thriller.

The revival of the Nations Cup competition at Dijon in October was a crucial step in the renaissance. More standalone races in 2013 and focused management will further enhance the movement's profile.

**HIGH-DOWNFORCE HEROICS**

The highest speed I knowingly saw a racing car pull this season was 208mph, not at the British GP but according to the gearing of the mighty Group C Nissan R90CK of Steve Tandy and Joe Osborne at Imola in October. For sheer spectacle, though, it was trumped by the quickest BOSS GP machine at Dijon in June.

Jaguar's F1 R5 of 2004 was not conspicuously successful as drivers ►



Noble won the Radical UK Cup

**“The Walter Hayes reminded me how good Formula Ford 1600 racing is”**



WHT is the one all Ford racers want to win

◀ Mark Webber and Christian Klien will attest, although each scraped a sixth-place finish. Watching one shrieking around a circuit that last hosted the French GP in 1984, however, wowed those who rushed to trackside.

It's funny how different colour schemes brings anonymity to a car once familiar to millions. But the urgency of its Cosworth V10 engine as BOSS prime mover Klaas Zwart rocketed past the pits at over 194mph in testing, then hit a staggering 168mph in the swoops on raceday, was magnificent.

Zwart was unable to join a decent field at Imola, where bold Austrian Ingo Gerstl's modified GP2 car set the pace prior to a black-flag misunderstanding, but I can't imagine an adrenaline rush much higher for pecunious amateurs.

#### WALTER HAYES TROPHY

It didn't take more than a few minutes at November's Walter Hayes Trophy to remind me - not that I had forgotten - just how good Formula Ford 1600 racing is. Since James Beckett founded it in 2001, honouring the architect of Ford's shrewdest racing decisions (Hayes also badged Cosworth's DFV F1 engine that also first appeared in a golden 1967), the end-of-season showpiece at Silverstone has grown to become one of the greatest events on the calendar.

The Kent-engined Formula Ford was, and remains, multi-marque junior single-seater racing at its purest. Looking back, it was never the same once Blue Oval marketers introduced the hefty 1800cc Zetec engine for 1993. Subsequent Duratec and EcoBoost

(known colloquially as 'ego-boost' in some circles) eras have failed to recapture the influence of FF1600 in a very different landscape.

Without a visionary of Hayes's calibre and a rationalisation of categories the world will never experience such an iconic starter class again. Yet the WHT - which has taken over from the BRSCC's long-unmissable but now vapid FF Festival as the event to win - presents a window on a mighty product still raced widely, and the frenetic BRDC Silverstone championships of yore.

#### FOURTEEN SHADES OF GRAY

Fourteen wins from 14 starts is another remarkable testament to the ability of Tim Gray, who blitzed the 750 Motor Club's Road Going Bike-engined sportscar championship having jumped ship to lead Paul Nightingale's works Spire-Honda GT3 team.

The feat did not surprise, for the Nottingham man has rarely been beaten since his dominant Locost days, yet in RGB he faced very able opposition in seriously competitive cars.

Gray is one of those hugely dedicated club racers whose stunning CV should take him far in the sport. He is also a good bloke. In a bygone era, when willing benefactors - often frustrated drivers with the finance yet not the talent to excel on track - fulfilled their dreams by promoting proteges on merit, he would have been carving a top sportscar career by now. And I can't believe he'd be

**“Somebody needs to give Tim Gray a leg-up into Radical SR3 Cup at least, which would also open up RGB”**

slow in a single-seater...

Somebody needs to give him a leg-up into Radical SR3 Cup at least, which would also open up RGB. It's an attractive series bristling with innovative and good-looking cars from small-volume manufacturers. Contour, AB Sabre and BDN chassis have run with the other Spires, as have the one-off Wolfe and Mittell machines.

Gray dominated 750MC RGB



## GOODWOOD REVIVAL

September's Goodwood Revival meeting was widely lauded as the best in the event's 14-year history. I certainly thought so, and was totally captivated by guest of honour Dan Gurney's participation. Host Lord March's moving tribute - with emotive period film footage beautifully narrated by sister Nimmy - brought tears to many eyes in the presence of a humble legend.

The daily Silver Arrows demonstrations, particularly poignant for the likes of Murray Walker, who saw the Auto Union and Mercedes-Benz cars at Donington Park in the late 1930s, were wonderful too. That the savage rasp of mighty engines caused jaws to drop on the spectator banks was world-class theatre.

As was the Whitsun Trophy sportscar race, the weekend's fastest. The lead struggle between 2011 winner Jay Esterer (Chinook), Gary Pearson (Lola T70 Spyder) and McLaren M1 pilots Chris Goodwin and Roger Wills - with Simon Hadfield in tow until his Huffaker Genie broke - was awesome. Pearson's narrow victory over Canadian Esterer recreated a tantalising taste of early Can-Am racing in Sussex.

Shelby Cobras, Ferrari 250 GTs, the RAC TT Celebration and not a dud race on the programme kept everybody happy. No wonder the Revival sells out earlier every year.



Fleming starred in Guards Trophy

## HSCC GUARDS TROPHY

With no fewer than 189 registered competitors, interest in the HSCC's Guards Trophy has boomed in its sixth year, bucking the recession, to become the biggest club championship on the MSA's roster. The range of cars has never been broader, from Austin-Healey Sprites to McLaren M1B, and the quality of racing has been sensational.

The battle - albeit one ended prematurely by a piffling clutch-mechanism issue - between Lotus Elan drivers Nick Fleming and Martin O'Connell at Croft's Nostalgia Weekend in August was the best I saw all season. My heart was in my mouth as I witnessed the pair hurtling through the Jim Clark Esses abreast before Fleming's car wilted.

Fleming, who won a spectacular opening round at Donington (where the Pre-1966 GT cars and later Sports Racers



Whitsun Trophy fight was an epic

“September's Goodwood Revival meeting was widely lauded as the best in the event's 14-year history”

were split, as will happen more often next year) eventually secured the title with the 26R-spec car, but his solo victory in the AUTOSPORT Three Hours at Snetterton in the SPT equipe's Chevron B8 was the icing on his cake.

The Scot will gun for a hat-trick of enduro wins in 2013, when Jaguar E-types (which have had their own series for two years) will hopefully rejoin the Guardsmen.

## VINTAGE SPORTS-CAR CLUB

As an unashamed English Racing Automobiles fan I've always been drawn towards Vintage Sports-Car Club race meetings, where the wondrous voiturettes from Bourne are among many hallowed marques driven hard.

I recall a staggered-start Silverstone handicap being televised in my youth, thus Motors TV coverage of next April's season opener there will turn the clocks back to the era when Bentleys, Rileys, Austins and Morgan three-wheelers dived for glory. Historic Grand Prix cars and aero-engined specials will also be on the card.

Last September the VSCC - on whose events I've had great fun commentating with Nick Upton in recent seasons - visited Snetterton for the first time. A large and appreciative audience watched some tremendous sport and was delighted when ERA R11B (in which Ken Wharton won a sprint there in 1951) poignantly took

another Historic Seaman Trophy in David Morris's hands. Locals hailed it the club event of the year.

Another VSCC race meeting you should make the effort to visit is at Pembrey (in a new August 17/18 slot for 2013), where the grassroots club atmosphere is redolent of times long past. Well worth the trip to South Wales...

## HILLCLIMB HEAVEN

Inaugurated in 1947 - three years before AUTOSPORT's debut - the British Hillclimb Championship celebrated its 65th anniversary this season. As so often before, the title race was a close-run thing. Fascinatingly, this exacting (and exciting) branch of motorsport ended up with a first-time winner in both the drivers' and constructors' sections.

OMS stalwart Trevor Willis had signalled his intent to land the crown since his first Top 12 Run-Off victory in 2007. Third last year, with a single win at Cumbria's dramatic Barbon venue, he bounced back with an enlarged 3.4-litre Radical Powertec V8 engine in his Steve Owen-built chassis. With commitment and dogged determination, Willis bested triple champ Scott Moran, scoring 10 wins in his campaign. After 14 seasons of Gould domination, it's great for the discipline to have a new name on top. But while it's not strictly accurate to say that Willis's machine was powered by a motorcycle engine - even if the RPE unit was unashamedly derived from twinned Suzuki Hayabusa 'fours' - it's romantic to note that the last 'bike' engine to take the title was the 1100cc JAP Vee-twin in David Good's Cooper Mk8 back in 1961. ✘



Morris drove ERA R11B to poignant win

# REVIEW: WHAT WAS NEW IN 2012

**AUTOSPORT** takes its annual stock of the new categories that joined the club racing fray this season. By **BEN ANDERSON** and **KEVIN TURNER**

## BRSCC FIESTA JUNIOR



It took a long time to arrive and many questioned whether there was a need for another junior tin-top series alongside Ginetta Junior and Saxmax, but Fiesta Junior showed some promise in its first season.

The grids only once made it into double figures (10 cars contested the season finale at Brands Hatch), but the racing was often very close, with six races settled by less than a second. May's Donington Park round featured an encounter settled by an astonishing 0.013s!



Fiesta Junior was small but delivered close races

## MSVR FF1600 SUPER SERIES



There wasn't really anything 'super' about this series, which started life as EuroNational Formula Ford 1600 and morphed into the Super Series.

Run by MSVR, this was category guru James Beckett's attempt to give club Formula Ford racers a chance to race abroad, but few were prepared to break their ingrained regional habits.

Races at Kirkistown and Brands Hatch were fine, thanks to strong Northern Irish and Champion of Brands followings, but trips to Croix and Monza failed to materialise altogether - replaced by a thin grid for the BARC-run Champion of Mallory races.

For a category that has struggled to maintain a strong National UK series, it's no great surprise that a pan-European effort failed. Next year's expanded and UK-focused calendar, which will sensibly piggyback established events, looks a better prospect.



Lotus Elan celebration was no E-type Challenge

## CSCC LOTUS ELAN 50



Some eyebrows were raised when the big historic organising clubs decided to leave the 50th anniversary of the Lotus Elan alone this year, but in stepped the Classic Sports Car Club to run two races to celebrate the birth of Colin Chapman's popular 1960s design.

The first race was installed on MSVR's Lotus Festival summer bill at Brands Hatch and managed an impressive grid of 20 cars (no doubt helped by the lure of an all-Lotus event on the Grand Prix circuit). But a more modest field of just 13 contested the finale at Donington in September, evidence that this particular celebration didn't capture the imagination in quite the same way as last year's ultra-successful 50th anniversary Jaguar E-type Challenge.

## MA5DA MX150R



Jonathan Blake launched the MX150R kit car as a way of offering his Ma5da MX5 drivers a performance step from their usual machines, but, whichever way you look at it, it's been a flop so far. There were usually only two or three out at any one time (the peak grid was five) and they were only a handful of seconds quicker than the Mk3 MX5s.

Blake absorbed the losses by allowing conventional MX5s from his other series to race alongside the MX150Rs, and unsurprisingly they dominated the grid, but having the headline class look like an invitation to its own grid is not a healthy scenario.

Super Series will be revamped for 2013



MX150R failed to take off in its first season

**ALFA ROMEO OWNERS CLUB SERIES**



The Alfa Romeo Owners Club's return to race organisation warrants a mixed review at best. Its attempt to offer a classic alternative to the broader mix of the BRSCC's Alfa Romeo Championship was originally scheduled for eight meetings this year, but only managed three.

But when they did turn out there were enough cars to suggest there is some potential here. Eleven made the grid at Silverstone in May and there was a season-high 14 competing at Mallory Park's Autoglym Festival in July.



Three modest races for AROC

**CSCC SPECIAL SALOONS**



After a successful pilot event in 2011, the Special Saloons enjoyed a short series of races this season. Grid sizes varied - at Donington Park the second race was amalgamated with the HVRA V8 Challenge - but the cars were spectacular.

The racing was pretty good too, with Joss Ronchetti's Talbot Sunbeam Lotus (a modern take on a super saloon) fighting the Vauxhall Carlton of Pete Stevens and Joe Ward's 'Baby Bertha' for overall honours until an unfortunate crunch at Donington.



Great racing and spectacular cars in CSCC Special Saloons

FISCAR made a solid start



**FISCAR HISTORIC INTERMARQUE**



The grass-roots movement aimed at providing a UK-based home for relatively standard sports cars of the 1950s was promising in its first year. Many of the entries were former (or current) AMOC runners and fields were normally around 20 or more. There was also a nice mix of machinery.

Perhaps its biggest weakness was a relative lack of competitiveness, with the Lotus Elite of Brian Arculus dominating more often than not. Nevertheless, expect to see FISCAR involved in other new initiatives in the near future.



MG breakaway was a success

**MGCC ECURIE GTS**



AUTOSPORT isn't normally a fan of breakaway series, which is what Ecurie GTS was - after doubts over the future of the AMOC's Equipe GTS - but this seemed to work.

With no date clashes, both series for pre-1966 sub-2700cc sports cars generally attracted grids of 20 or more. The biggest exception was AMOC's Oulton Park entry of nine, which came just a week after 21 turned up for the MGCC outing at Brands.

Like FISCAR, there wasn't much in the way of close battles at the front of Ecurie GTS, with the season finale at Snetterton the only race being decided by under a second.



HRDC made a loss on TC63

**HRDC TC63 and MGB50**



Failure doesn't often look this good! The TC63 series for pre-1964 Group 2 touring cars averaged almost 22 cars for each of its four UK meetings, but HRDC boss Julius Thurgood made a loss on it. The result is that he has put the series together with his Grand Touring Greats and MGB50 initiatives to form HRDC Allstars next year. It's a rare case of an organiser moving early to solve a problem

**MASTERS CAN-AM INTERSERIE CHALLENGE**



If it weren't for our enthusiasm for all things Can-Am - fast, thundering V8 sports cars - we'd probably give this no stars at all. British grids were dismal and even the stronger entries in Continental events were really propped up by a range of European two-litre sports cars and Group C machinery.



Can-Am was a thunderous flop

**HVRA V8 CHALLENGE**



There's something appealing about getting together a pack of rorty V8 tin-tops and that's what Bernie Chodosh did this year, after a trial run at Snetterton in 2011. Grids started well, nudging the 30 mark, but had tailed off by around a third come the end of the season. Most of the winning margins were pretty big, but there was also a good mix of winners, so it can only be hoped the initiative builds on a promising start.



Bernie's V8s has promise



MGB50 wasn't all it could've been

rather than letting it drag on... MGB50 was less popular, not helped by a lack of cooperation between the HRDC and MGCC, or the loss of one of the key organisers during the season. Perhaps the HRDC's grid of 30 cars at the televised Queen's Jubilee race at Mallory Park and the MGCC's massive 58-strong entry at Silverstone MGLive demonstrated that a couple of big events were more appropriate celebrations of the iconic design than a full series...

# SPORTS EXTRA 2012 CHAMPIONS



David Coulthard became first FWD winner of the MGCC's Cockshoot Cup

## BRSCC

Alfa Romeo Roger Evans (147 GTA)  
 British Formula Ford  
 Antti Buri (Mygale M12-SJ)  
 British GT3 Michael Caine/Daniele Perfetti (Porsche 997 GT3)  
 British GT4 Jody Fannin/Warren Hughes (Ginetta G50)  
 Euro Saloons and Sports Cars  
 Wayne Schofield (Suzuki Cappuccino)  
 Caterham R300 Superlight Paul Wilson  
 Caterham Supersport Aaron Head  
 Caterham Tracksport David Robinson  
 Caterham Roadsport Brad Smith  
 Caterham Academy Group 1 Alex Gurr  
 Caterham Academy Group 2  
 Stephen Nuttall  
 National Formula Ford 1600  
 John Murphy (Van Diemen RF90)  
 Northern FF1600 Post-89  
 John Murphy (Van Diemen RF90)

Northern FF1600 Pre-90  
 Stuart Jones (Reynard SF89)  
 FF1600 Triple Crown  
 Luke Cooper (Swift SC10)  
 FF1600 Champion of Oulton  
 Neil Winn (Van Diemen LA10)  
 FF1600 Star of Anglesey  
 John Murphy (Van Diemen RF90)  
 Ford XR Challenge Craig Brookfield (XR2)  
 Ford Fiesta Jason Cooper (ST)  
 Fiesta Junior Charles Ladell  
 TVR Challenge Tim Davis (Tuscan RV8)  
 Formula Jedi Richard Mitcham  
 Fun Cup Racelogic  
 Porsche Boxster Rick Styrin  
 Porsche 924 Alastair Kirkham  
 Ma5da MX5 Championship Tom Roche  
 Ma5da MX5 Cup Luke Herbert  
 Ma5da MX150R Kevin Dengate  
 Mighty Minis Chris Slade  
 Super Mighty Minis Chris Morgan  
 OSS Darcy Smith (Radical SR4)  
 Production GT1 John Mawdsley  
 VW Racing Cup  
 James Walker (Scirocco R)  
 Sports 2000 Duratec  
 Mike Jenvey (Jenvey-Gunn TS6)  
 Sports 2000 Pinto  
 Peter Needham (Tiga SC82)  
 Sports 2000 Historic  
 Peter Needham (Tiga SC82)  
 Porsche Club Alex Eacock (968 CS)  
 NSSCC Bill Addison (Caterham Superlight)

## BARC

Formula Renault BARC Scott Malvern  
 Classic Formula Ford 2000  
 Ian Pearson (Van Diemen RF83)

Steve Train claimed Lotus Cup UK crown



Classic Formula Ford 1600  
 Stuart Kestenbaum (Van Diemen RF79)  
 InterSteps Matt Parry  
 Renault Clio Cup Jack Goff  
 Production Touring Car Trophy  
 Gary Duckman (SEAT Leon)  
 Citroen 2CV Alec Graham  
 Kumho BMW Colin Wells (M3)  
 Classic Saloons and Historic Touring Cars  
 Phil Manser (Mini Cooper)  
 Post-Historic Touring Cars  
 David Howard (Jaguar XJ12)  
 Group One Touring Cars  
 Tim Scott Andrews (Rover SD1)  
 Pre-93 Touring Cars  
 Daniel Smoughton (BMW E30 320i)  
 Blue Oval Saloons  
 Ashley Bird (Ford Sierra Cosworth)  
 Classic Thunder  
 Garrie Whittaker (BMW E36 M3)

Legends Lawrence Davey  
 Porsche Carrera Cup GB Michael Meadows  
 Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge James Birch  
 Clubmans Cup  
 Alex Champkin (Vision V84)  
 Clubmans Cup Proto  
 Ian Crombie (Mallock Mk28B)  
 Classic Clubmans Class A  
 John Harrison (Mallock Mk21)  
 Classic Clubmans Class B  
 Paul Marshall (Mallock Mk18B)  
 Ginetta GT Supercup Carl Breeze (G55)  
 Ginetta G50 Cup Mark Davies  
 Ginetta Junior Charlie Robertson  
 Ginetta G40 Challenge Sean Huyton  
 Ginetta G20 Challenge Matt Flowers  
 Caterham Classic Graduates David Pearson  
 Caterham Sigma Graduates Ian Anderson  
 Caterham Super Graduates Dylan Stanley  
 Caterham Mega Graduates Myles Packman

MGOC Jim Baynam (MGB Roadster)  
 Pickup Trucks Steve Dance  
 Welsh Sports and Saloon Car  
 Championship Martin Davies (Ford Sierra  
 Cosworth) & Michael Cond (Sylva Riot)  
 Quaife MN Saloons  
 Gavin Thomson (Peugeot 205)  
 Mini Se7en Paul Spark  
 Mini Miglia Peter Baldwin  
 CNC Heads North West Sports Saloons  
 Dennis Crompton (BMW E36 M3)

## MSVR

F3 Cup Chris Dittmann (Dallara F301)  
 Golf GT1 Mk2 Jamie Martin  
 GT Cup  
 Derek Johnston (Ferrari 458 Challenge)  
 Lotus Cup UK Supersport  
 Steve Train (2 Eleven)  
 Lotus Cup UK Production  
 Rob Boston (Elise)  
 Mini Challenge Henry Gilbert  
 Monoposto 2000  
 Malcolm Scott (Dallara F398)  
 Monoposto 2000 Classic  
 Jim Blockley (Ralt RT3)  
 Monoposto 1800  
 Ewen Sergison (Swift SC99Z)  
 Monoposto 1600  
 Nigel Davers (Van Diemen RF89)  
 Monoposto Moto Adrian Wright (GEM)  
 Production BMW Ben Winrow (320i)  
 Radical Clubman's Cup Bradley Smith (SR3)  
 Radical UK Cup Colin Noble (SR3)  
 Radical European Masters  
 Konstantin Calko (SR3)  
 VAG Trophy  
 Paul Taylor (VW Golf R32 Mk5)

John Murphy beat the kids in FF1600



Chris Dittmann won inaugural F3 Cup title



David Gathercole's Lola topped Martini Trophy

Peter Baldwin: septugenarian Mini Miglia champion in 2012



## 750MC

**750 Formula** Dave Robson (SDAR/83)  
**Bike-Sports** James Breakell (Radical PR6)  
**Formula 4**  
 Robbie Watts (Van Diemen RAW 01)  
**Formula Vee**  
 Paul Smith (AHS Dominator)  
**MR2** Paul Hinson  
**Locost** Michael Comber  
**Stock Hatch**  
 Joe Ferguson (Citroen Saxo VTR)  
**Classic Hatch**  
 Damian Cottrell (Vauxhall Nova GTD)  
**RGB** Tim Gray (Spire GT3)  
**Saxmax** Owen Hunter

## Historic Touring Cars

Dan Cox (Lotus Cortina)  
**70s Road Sports**  
 John Thomason (Triumph GT6)  
**Historic Road Sports**  
 Paul Tooms (Lotus Elan)  
**Historic FF1600**  
 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk20A)  
**Historic FF2000**  
 Nelson Rowe (Reynard SF79)  
**Classic Racing Cars**  
 Ian Jones (Lotus 59)  
**Historic Formula 2**  
 Tim Barrington (Lola T240)  
**Historic Formula Junior**  
 Robert Barrie (Lotus 18)  
**Martini Trophy**  
 David Gathercole (Lola T212)

## MASTERS

**GP Masters**  
 Andrew Beaumont (Lotus 76)  
**World Sportscar Masters**  
 Mark Bates (Porsche 911 RSR)  
**Gentlemen Drivers** Andy Wolfe/  
 Graham Wilson (Lotus Elan 26R)  
**Pre-66 Touring Cars**  
 Leo Voyazides (Ford Falcon)

## SMRC

**Mini Cooper Cup** David Sleight  
**Classic Sports & Saloons**  
 Robert Marshall (Ford Escort RS)  
**FF1600** Ross McEwan (Van Diemen RF92)  
**Legends** Carol Brown  
**Ford Fiesta XR2** Peter Cruickshank  
**Ford Fiesta ST** Dave Colville  
**Saloons & Sports Cars**  
 Garry Watson (Westfield)

**Formula Sheane** Brian Hearty  
**Formula Vee**  
 Lee Newsome (Sheane FV94)  
**Fiat Abarth** Gary Miller  
**Global Lights** Alan Byrne  
**Strykers** Alan Watkins  
**Ginetta Junior Ireland** Jake Byrne  
**ITCC** Philip Brennan (BMW E36 M3)  
**Historics** Bernard Foley (MGB GT V8)

## KIRKISTOWN

**NIFF1600** Ivor McCullough (Van Diemen RFOO)  
**Roadsports** Ryan Magennis (GMS Honda)  
**Saloons** Gerard McVeigh (Mitsubishi Evo)  
**GT** David Beatty (Ginetta G50)

## CCRC

**FF1600** Ben Norton (Spectrum O10b)  
**Saloons** William di Claudio (Peugeot 106)  
**Sports & GT** Gary Prebble (Mitsubishi Evo)

## MONDELLO PARK

**Formula Libre Ireland**  
 Martin Daly (Formula Renault Tatuus)

## MGCC

**MG Trophy** Chris Bray (ZR190)  
**Midget Challenge** Nigel Pratt  
**BCV8** Mike Harris (MGB)  
**Thoroughbred Sportscars**  
 Rob Spencer (MGB GT V8)  
**Cockshoot Cup**  
 David Coulthard (MG ZR190)  
**Metro Cup** Tom Grainger  
**Peter Best Challenge**  
 James Darby (MGB GT)

## HSCC

**Classic Formula 3**  
 Jamie Brashaw (March 793)  
**Guards Trophy**  
 Nick Fleming (Lotus Elan)



Will di Claudio's little Pug beat the Combe Saloons hordes

## AMOC

**Aston Martin Championship**  
 Peter Dubskey (Aston 15/98)  
**Intermarque** Wayne Marrs (Ferrari 355)

## SEMSEC

**Overall**  
 Charles Harvey-Kelly (Radical SR4)  
**Saloon & Sports Car** Tristram Barden (Mini)  
**Sports Racing & Kit Car**  
 Paul Gibb (Caterham 7HPC)

## CSCC

**Jaguar XJS/XK8** Ian Drage (XJS)  
**Jaguar Saloons** Gall Hill (XJ40)

# FINAL DRIVE

LETTERS ■ GEAR ■ ON-TRACK ■ ON-SCREEN ■ PICS ■ ARCHIVE

## YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



F1 is poorer without giant-killing teams

### Formula 1 still needs its small fry

So, Bernie Ecclestone says Formula 1 'still has too many teams'. Surely, it has too many elite teams and too few are competing with a genuine chance of a podium finish?!

The fact is, F1 is a three-horse race and there is currently no-one challenging the big boys. I accept that within the infrastructure of the sport Ferrari plays an important role financially, but ultimately sport is about competition and, best of all, giant-killing.

Come on the minnows!

**Simon Terry, Great Notley, Essex**

AUTOSPORT.COM

### TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. HAUG TO LEAVE MERCEDES AFTER 2012
2. TEAM BOSSES SAY ALONSO IS BEST OF 2012
3. WEBBER: FORCING ISSUES HURT TITLE BID
4. WILLIAMS DEFENDS SENNA/BOTTAS STRATEGY
5. ECCLESTONE WANTS 10-TEAM F1 FIELD

AUTOSPORT+

### TOP STORY ONLINE

HIDDEN TRUTHS OF SCHUEY'S COMEBACK

To read this exclusive feature and many others like it, log on to [autosport.com/plus](http://autosport.com/plus) and choose which package you'd like. A month will cost £5.50, a year £46. Includes access to Forix - the ultimate stats website.

## WIN!



### ROAD ANGEL VANTAGE

This week's star letter will receive a Road Angel Vantage - a dedicated safety camera and blackspot locator that displays the legal speed limit of every road you drive, automatically and wirelessly updating its database every few minutes as you drive. For more details on Road Angel visit [www.roadangelgroup.com](http://www.roadangelgroup.com) Please ensure that your full address is included on all correspondence.

FROM THE FORUM - [forums.autosport.com](http://forums.autosport.com)

WHAT OUR READERS ARE TALKING ABOUT RIGHT NOW

- Biggest Pain in Racing?
- AUTOSPORT team principals' top 10

### CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

It is the policy of AUTOSPORT to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please note the issue date and page number when contacting us on [autosport.editorial@haynet.com](mailto:autosport.editorial@haynet.com)

EDITORIAL CONTACT [mail@autosport.com](mailto:mail@autosport.com)

**Although HRT had its critics** for being a lost cause, it's a shame that the team was unable to find a buyer.

Perhaps now it's time for the sport to consider the budget caps that Max Mosley proposed. It may just prevent the loss of one or two more F1 teams in the next few years.

**Duncan Sabiston**  
Didcot

**While F1 is all about**

innovation, each season brings a conflict between the letter and the supposed spirit of the law.

So why not document the

latter? Why not include a statement such as 'Article x.y.z is intended to ensure that brake cooling devices have an aerodynamically neutral effect on downforce and drag'?

The FIA has ranged against it a dozen teams of equally clever people, so it would have a safety net when inevitably one group of boffins has driven a truck through its definition of a hole in a car's floor.

It doesn't prevent someone being clever, of building a headrest that leads to increased KERS

performance, say, but it does prevent someone bending a rule clearly intended to restrict development in the direction they are trying.

**Paul Irwin**  
Bexleyheath

**Further to Alan Harding's** letter last week about the lack of posters at his local Citroen dealer, this is not just isolated to the WRC.

The Honda dealership in my town has no promotional material relating to the clean sweep of the BTCC.

It seems their Le Mans-style formation finish at the

final race was all for nothing, with only Scorpion exhausts using an image of it on their website's news page.

I thought the idea of manufacturers entering these championships was for promotion and subsequently to sell road cars.

**Michael Woods**  
By email

**Just read the Great Debate** in last week's AUTOSPORT.

What a great idea for the off-season this is! Thank you very much. Keep up the good work!

**Rob King**  
By email

# THE LATEST GEAR

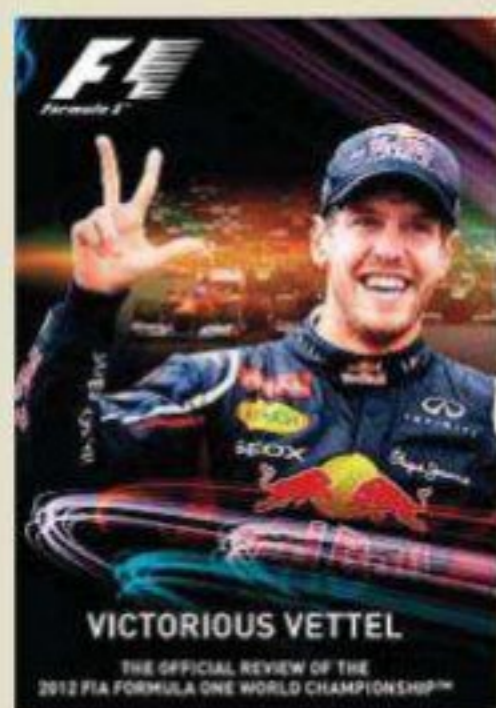
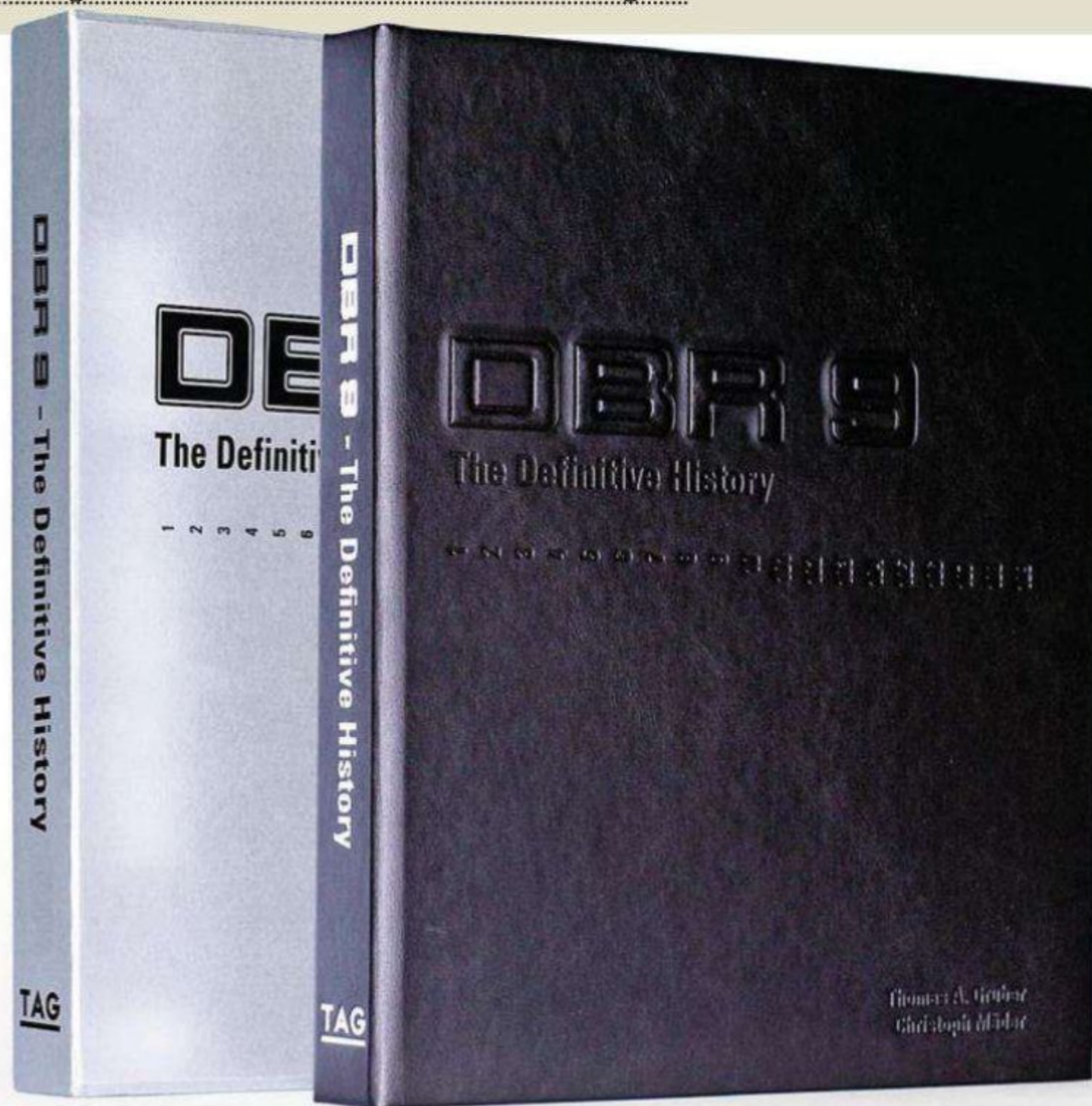
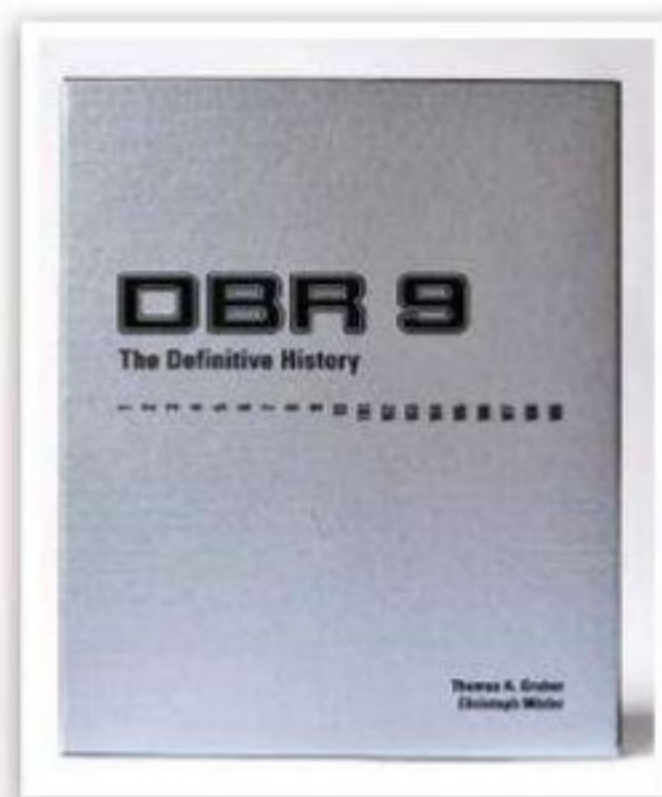
Desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts

## DBR9 - THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY

€450-650 RRP (978 3 200 02797 8)

tag-books.com

This stunning celebration of Aston Martin's most successful racer is a lavish production that borders on a work of art. While the story behind each of the 19 chassis built is told in fine depth, it's the brilliant three-dimensional x-ray technical drawings that lift this book into the extraordinary. It's certainly not cheap, but this is reflected in the quality of the packaging and the attention to detail of the content. Just 3000 will be printed, making this a must-have for die-hard fans of Aston's ultimate GT1 racer.

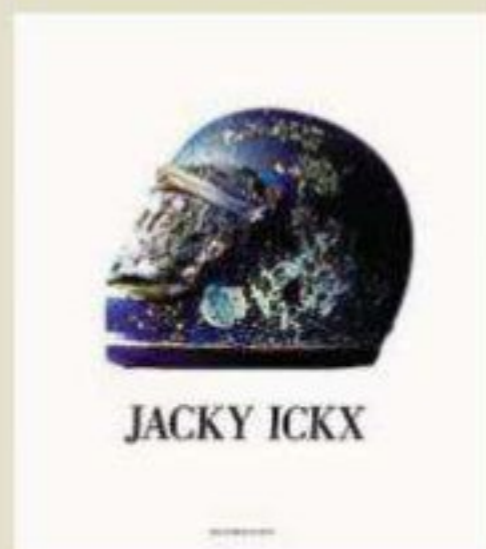


## F1 2012 REVIEW DVD

£16.99

dukevideo.com

The official DVD review of the 2012 Formula 1 season is not due to hit the shelves until early January but it's worth giving you a quick heads-up – you need something to spend that Christmas money on. It's a two-disc compilation once again, with plenty of on- and off-track action from what was a great season.



## JACKY ICKX BOOK

€33.60 (978 9491 376 146)

accdistribution.com

This high-quality hardback photobook features 24 defining moments in the career of one of racing's greatest all-rounders, Belgian Jacky Ickx. Many of the F1, Le Mans, Can-Am, touring car and Dakar pics, including the grizzly burned-helmet cover image from Jarama 1970, have not been seen before.



## VTRIKER SCOOTER

From £55.99

vtriker.com

The new Vtriker elite scooter would be a good weapon for budding young stuntmen or women, but probably a safer bet for jetting across a race paddock with minimal effort. Just move your legs in and out and you'll be away. It comes with brakes to temper early enthusiasm and folds up for storage.

## HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

**YOUTUBE: THE WORLD'S FUNNIEST ONBOARD VIDEO... EVER**



**SEARCH FOR:** 1992 Snetterton Rally (35:00)

We've saved the funniest and longest video ever to appear here for our final issue of the year. Crank up the volume, fill screen, sit back and weep as these two amateur rallyists unleash themselves all over Snetterton. 12 out of 10 to you both.

# WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world this week – plus TV and online



They'll be racing in their Christmas jumpers at Mallory

## MALLORY PARK (BARC)

December 26

Admission £13 on the gate, £11 in advance

Tel: 01455 842931

For the ultra-keen (or those that don't fancy the scrum of the sales) among you, Leicestershire's 'friendly circuit' hosts the final UK race meeting of 2012 on Boxing Day (weather permitting). The annual Plum Pudding handicap races usually attract a decent crowd, with races for saloons, sportscars and bikes on the menu. Probably tastier than your average Christmas turkey leftovers.

## AUTOSPORT

# SOAPBOX



The FIA crusade to boost F3 has done anything but, says MARCUS SIMMONS

**T**he FIA's mission to boost Formula 3 over the past 12 months has, ironically, done little but play into the hands of the rival GP3 and World Series by Renault.

And that's without asking why FIA Single-Seater Commission president Gerhard Berger chose to concentrate on F3 in the first place. Some are baffled that he didn't shine his spotlight on the mess that encompasses the first steps post-karting. After all, no point rebuilding a house unless you sort out the foundations first.

Berger now has his FIA European F3 Championship, for 2013 a rebadged Euro Series, and wants all the other F3 series to run within their own national borders, with drivers contesting the odd European round as they see fit.

But times have moved on. In Berger's F3 days, a bunch of hairy Swedes could plug *Led Zeppelin IV* into their eight-track cartridge player and happily trailer their Ralt RT3 from Karlskoga to Kassel-Calden for a crack at the Europeans. Now, it's a minimum £500k budget to race with a professional team and staff (that's actually not bad value, when a dual Formula Renault Eurocup/ALPS campaign is up to £400k and FR3.5 is £1 million).

When they're paying that money,



Aero parts: maybe frozen to post-Norising shunt spec...

the customers want F1-level tracks, especially as that's exactly what they get at junior level in FRenault. Besides, F3 cars, in doing what they're supposed to do – prepare drivers for F1 – are so aero-dependent that it's virtually impossible to overtake on smaller tracks, even if they're great to watch in qualifying.

Berger wants to cut the costs of F3. Good, but he's representing the same FIA that has just imposed charges on series organisers who run races outside their borders, charges that will be passed on via entry fees to competitors.

And then there are the engines... F3 was definitely going to be for new engine rules in 2013 (and yes, they'll be cheaper), but Mercedes and Volkswagen – whose support is the absolute bedrock of the European championship – failed to register their interest with the FIA by the March 31 2012 cut-off.

The FIA now has guarantees from the two German powerhouses to build new engines for 2014, but its 2013 compromise of running old and new rules in parallel – with performance balancing – has infuriated those tuners

who committed to the new rules by March 31. And it still hasn't been decided what form that performance balancing will take.

Then there's the World Motor Sport Council statement that "aerodynamic parts have been frozen". As one top engineer put it to me, frozen from what? Each team's current state of development? Unlikely (we hope), as that would mean the competitive order would be set for good, but such uncertainty and vagueness must end now for the category to survive.

## Television

### THURSDAY DECEMBER 20

2305-0215 [Motors TV](#)  
Race of Champions: Nations Cup Replay

### FRIDAY DECEMBER 21

1650-2000 [Motors TV](#)  
Race of Champions Replay

### SATURDAY DECEMBER 22

0350-0420 [Channel 5](#)  
Motorsport Mundial

### SUNDAY DECEMBER 23

0730-0830 [Eurosport](#)  
WTCC: Season Review  
1125-1325 [ITV4](#)  
BTCC: Season Review  
2000-2305 [Motors TV](#)  
FIA WEC: Season Review

### MONDAY DECEMBER 24

2000-2030, 2330-000 [Eurosport 2](#)  
Race2Recovery: The Road to Dakar

### TUESDAY DECEMBER 25

1000-1100 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012 Season Review  
1720-1750 [Motors TV](#)  
FIA WEC: 2012 Best Moments  
1200-1400, 1500-1700 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012 – A season to remember

### WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 26

1000-1200, 1630-1830 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012 – A season to remember  
1900-1930 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Red Bull – The Triple Double  
1930-2000 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Ferrari – Fight for the title

### THURSDAY DECEMBER 27

1615-1715 [Eurosport 2](#)  
Race of Champions: 2012 Highlights  
1900-1930 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Lewis and Jenson's Year  
1930-2000 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Lotus – Comeback Kings

### FRIDAY DECEMBER 28

1900-1930 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Mercedes – Brawn's Report  
1930-2000 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Sauber – Power Serg (sic)

### SATURDAY DECEMBER 29

1030-1230 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012 – A season to remember  
1300-1400 [BBC1](#)  
F1 2012 Season Review  
1500-1530 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Force India – A drivers' story  
1530-1600 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Williams – Back on the top step  
1650-1750 [Motors TV](#)  
V8 Supercars: Season Review  
1835-1905 [ESPN Classic](#)  
F1 British GP: 1973  
1905-1940 [ESPN Classic](#)  
F1 British GP: 1977

### SUNDAY DECEMBER 30

1500-1530 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Toro Rosso – Rookies on rise  
1530-1600 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Caterham – The fight for 10th

### MONDAY DECEMBER 31

1500-1530 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: Marussia – On the up  
1530-1600 [Sky Sports F1](#)  
F1 2012: HRT – Battle at the back

## Online

# AUTOSPORT+

Coming up in our premium web content this week



Grosjean (left) pushed Kimi in 2012

## WHY LOTUS IS RIGHT TO KEEP GROSJEAN

AUTOSPORT's Edd Straw argues that, despite all his mistakes, Romain Grosjean is too good to be forgotten by F1, and explains why the ambitious Lotus squad is right to keep the Frenchman alongside Kimi Raikkonen for 2013.

## HILL ON GIVING UP ON FORMULA 1

Former world champion Damon Hill talks about the challenges old rival Michael Schumacher will face after F1.



## NASCAR SEASON REVIEW 2012

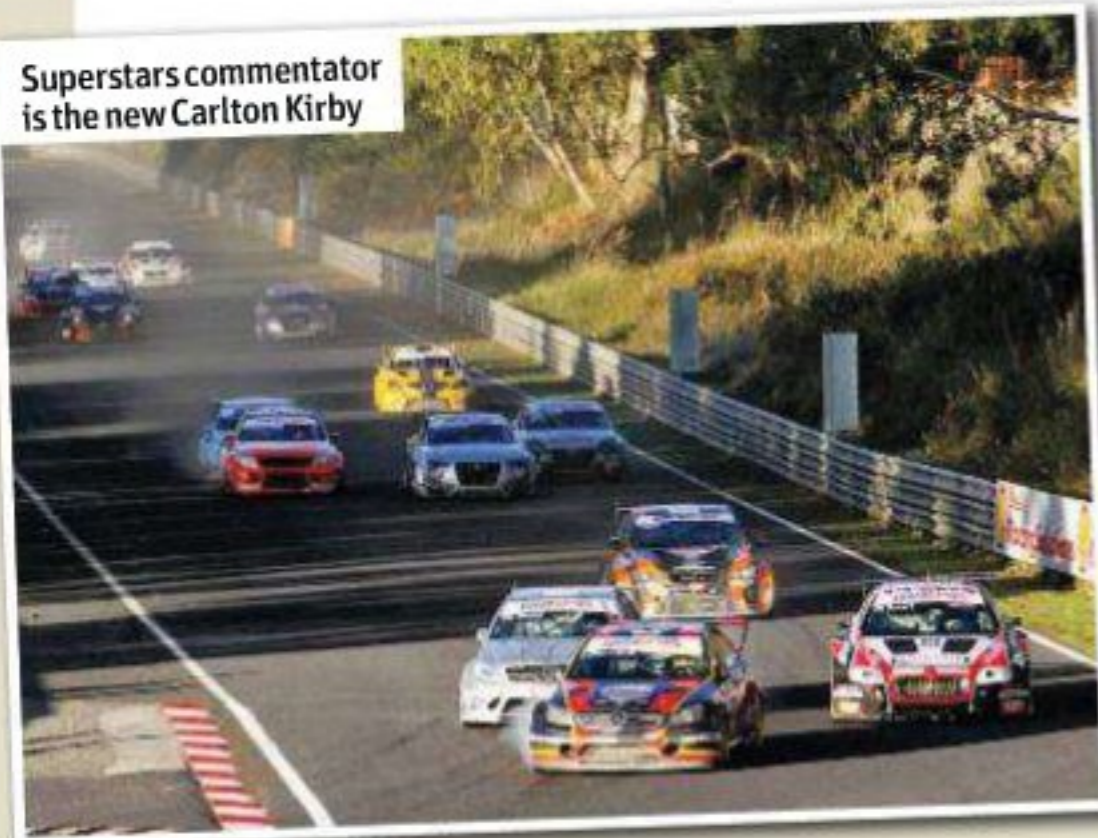
We look back at a hard-fought and dramatic NASCAR title battle.



## REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this year's TV coverage

Superstars commentator is the new Carlton Kirby



**HELLO, AND WELCOME TO** the Revvies, the Golden Globes of televised motorsport. This year's awards are slightly different and, while Martin Brundle rightly gets Best Line of the Year Award for his "I haven't been this disappointed since I saw *Shrek 2*" quip about Schuey's comeback, it's the Carlton Kirby Worst Commentator of the Year Award that dominates.

Sorry Carlton, you've been beaten at your own award. Someone has stolen your thunder. Before he's named and shamed, let's go back over some of the,

er, highlights of his year.

From the Enna Superstars race, as a series of cars cut the first chicane: "Lots of locking up there... and there is no corner."

During the installation lap ahead of the 13-lap season opener at Monza: "Autodromo Nazionale Monza, 5793 kilometres of pure unadulterated speed."

The start of the race highlights from Mugello: "And the start of the race. And it was Tom Biagi and Sandro Bettini. Sandro Bettini swamped a little bit by Camilo Zurcher. Zurcher goes round the outside. But Sandro Bettini wanting to

come back up the inside for the first corner, as er, um, and er, ah, and Andrea Larini got hit, he was the one who got the damage. But the person who came out worst from that was team-mate Camilo Zurcher."

As points leader Johan Kristoffersson is brutally taken out, again at Enna. "OH NO! THAT'S NICO CALDAROLA. A BIG HIT THERE AND THAT'S... UNBELIEVABLE. [pause]

Johan Kristoffersson has BEEN TAKEN OUT! NUMBER 46, JOHAN KRISTOFFERSSON HAS BEEN TAKEN OUT OF THE RACE. He's not going to start on that."

Depressingly, this could run and run. But for all this, and so much less, the mantle of the worst commentator of 2012 goes to the shouty, incomprehensible Clive McNeil. Take a bow sir. *Revved Up*

"From the start of the Superstars race at Enna: 'Lots of locking up there... and there is no corner'"

# THE WEEK IN PICTURES

Our lensmen pounding the beat, from Andorra to Bangkok, via the Ferrari factory in Italy



**SCHUEY AND VETTEL CAPTURE NATIONS' CUP**  
The German stars (10 F1 titles between them) took their sixth straight team win in last weekend's Race of Champions



**PANIS OPTS FOR ICE AND A SLICE IN ANDORRA**  
Former Monaco GP winner Olivier Panis is back in action for Dacia in the Andros Trophy series



**RUDOLF AND FRIENDS JUST GOT A WHOLE LOT QUICKER...**  
Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa played Santa during Ferrari's recent kids' Christmas party in Maranello

**NEW LOOK FOR THE BLUE DEUCE**  
NASCAR Cup champion Brad Keselowski revealed his '13 warpaint in testing



PICS: IMP, LAT SOUTH

## NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE JANUARY 3 THE FIRST OF OUR LEGENDS SERIES: GRAHAM HILL **DON'T MISS IT!**

# FROM THE ARCHIVE

South African Grand Prix 1963 – no rest at Christmas



“Despite Clark’s dominance, it was Ferrari that entered the weekend as favourite following a one-two in the Rand GP”

L-r: Clark, Brabham and Gurney at front

**FORMULA 1 TEAMS MAY BE WORKED EVER-HARDER** these days as the calendar expands, but in 1962 and '63 they couldn't even be at home for Christmas, as in both those years the South African Grand Prix was held at the end of December, only a couple of days before New Year's Eve.

Jim Clark had already sewn up his maiden world championship success long before the December 28 1963 finale on the East London circuit, near the Indian Ocean coast. The Scot had already taken his Lotus-Climax to victory in six points-counting races over the season, with his retirement in the season opener in Monaco, while leading, representing the only time he had missed the podium.

Clark's run would continue in South Africa, as he surpassed Juan Manuel Fangio (six wins in 1954) and Alberto Ascari (six in '52) to take a new record of seven world championship race victories in a single season. Statistically, his winning rate of 70 per cent remains the third highest in history for a world championship season.

Despite such apparent dominance, it was Ferrari, rather than Lotus, that entered the weekend as favourite following a one-two for John Surtees and Lorenzo Bandini in the preceding, non-championship Rand Grand Prix at Kyalami.

Clark quickly put Lotus back in the ascendancy, capturing pole position from the Brabhams of Jack Brabham and

Dan Gurney. Surtees and Bandini gave Ferrari the second row on the 3-2-3 grid, although neither was able to get within eight tenths of Clark.

Clark preserved his advantage from the start ahead of Surtees, Gurney and Brabham. From there he simply stormed away, while the majority of his rivals hit trouble.

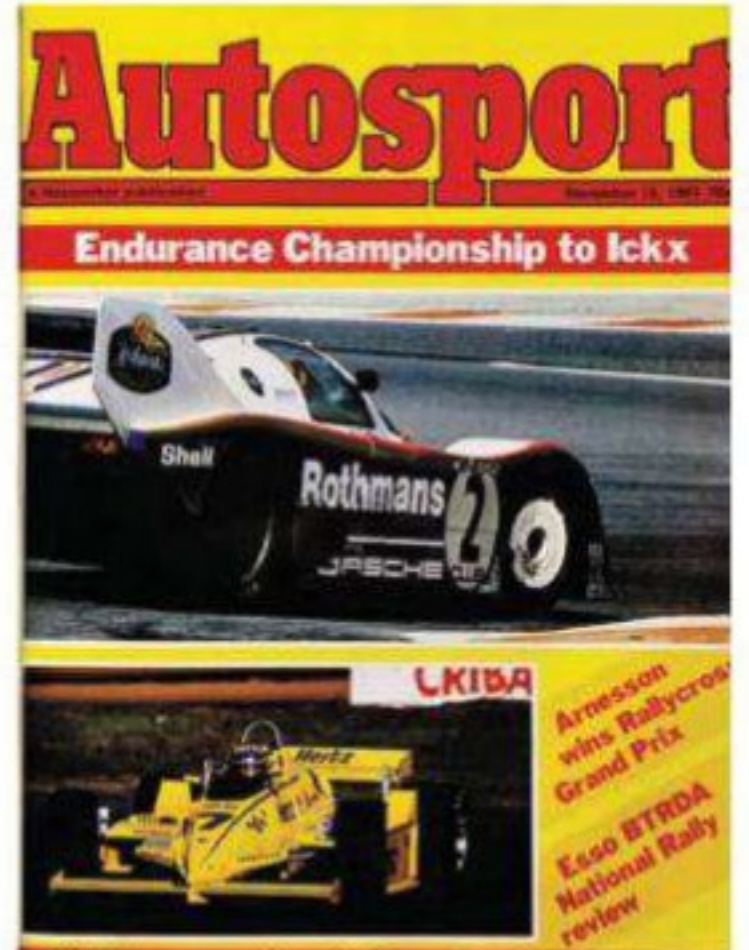
The Lotus had already constructed a 10-second advantage when, 10 laps in, Brabham's challenge faltered on what was later found to be a broken valve spring. By lap 35, and with Clark now a massive 30s ahead, Richie Ginther (BRM) and Surtees fell by the wayside.

Still Clark was relentless out front, pounding out an incessant 1m31s pace that few others could match. Gurney managed to deny him the fastest lap, and he was the only man to finish on the lead lap at the end of the 85 tours.

With only a driver's best six finishes of the season counting towards their championship position, Clark had already scored a perfect 54 points. He also helped earn Lotus the constructors' title.

With the South African GP being moved to New Year's Day, East London would host only one more championship race, in 1965. It hosted a non-points SAGP in '66 before the race was moved to Kyalami, which had received substantial upgrades and would hold the event each year until '85. ❧

## THIS WEEK IN...



**DECEMBER 15 1983**

### JACKY ICKX CLAIMED THE WORLD

Endurance Championship crown for a second straight year this week in 1983, with his third-place finish at the Kyalami season finale enough to defeat fellow Porsche driver Derek Bell by just three points.

It was the Briton who dominated in South Africa, as he and team-mate Stefan Bellof – who secured pole – led from lights to flag in their 956. Ickx wasn't quite so serene, but survived making contact with a backmarker to finish on the rostrum and seal the title.

Across at Brands Hatch, European Rallycross Champion Olle Arnesson triumphed in the discipline's second British Grand Prix, surging past Rolf Nilsson on the final lap in his purpose-built four-wheel-drive Audi Quattro.



PIC: LAT ARCHIVE

**COMING SOON!**

## THE AUTOSPORT LEGENDS SERIES RETURNS

**GRAHAM HILL**



**DAMON HILL**



**JOHN SURTEES**



**JAMES HUNT**



A must-read collection of special issues celebrating a quartet of Britain's finest grand prix world champions

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“This latest triumph makes **Bullrun** the **most successful team** in Britcar history, adding the **2012 GT Championship** to the Production Championship they won in 2010.” Autosport



Picture by View Photographic



Pictures by Garry Fuller

# WILLIAM WOOLLARD

■ Lombard RAC Rally ■ *Top Gear Rally Report* Studio, Nottingham ■ November 24-28, 1985 ■ Brits star at home



Pond starred on the debut event for the Metro 6R4

**HANNU MIKKOLA, JUHA Kankkunen, Markku Alen, Timo Salonen, Henri Toivonen.**

After all these years just rattling off the names from that generation of ace rally drivers brings back memories of cold winter nights, cars charging along narrow forest tracks, headlights flashing through the trees, mud and gravel spraying as they tore through treacherous bends. And what about our own Jimmy McRae and Russell Brookes, straining to hang onto the leaders as they fought their own never-ending battle in the ageing Opel Mantas? Those were great days.

For my money, rallying has so much to offer – it's immensely tough on cars and drivers, and packed full of incident and action.

Fans of a certain age will recall the *Top Gear Rally Report* shows that I fronted. We were right at the heart of the action, with all the reports coming in from the stages: who's in, who's out, who's rolled into the ditch, who's lost a wheel or smashed a gearbox. During the all-night stages we would often be going for 24 hours, which stoked up the drama and the adrenaline of the whole thing.

So which Lombard RAC was my favourite? Well, the 1985 rally was

**"The long, icy night stages in the Welsh forests took an immensely heavy toll. So many cars were wiped out"**

special for several reasons. It was the last event of a really turbulent season. And it was really tough – over 2000 miles, with 65 special stages over four days and nights. Indeed, only 62 of the 155 crews made it to the finish.

But above all we had two brand-new cars making their WRC debut. How often do we get that?

The Lancia Delta S4s, driven by Markku Alen and Henri Toivonen, were not only four-

wheel drive, but turbocharged and supercharged! And the squat, boxy, 410bhp, MG Metro 6R4, driven by a moustachioed Tony Pond and a young Malcolm Wilson, appeared.

The Lancias showed their pace right from the start. They had a few reliability fears with gearboxes and differentials, but they were really flying. Salonen and Kalle Grundel were hanging on in the Peugeot 205 T16s, with Pond and Wilson both in contention in the Metros.

## IN PROFILE



**WILLIAM WOOLLARD WILL BE** familiar to motoring enthusiasts from the 1980s. He fronted the BBC motoring show *Top Gear* for 10 years and hosted its *Rally Report* spin-off, bringing coverage of Britain's WRC qualifier, the Lombard RAC, into millions of homes each November. After quitting *Top Gear*, Woollard, now 73, ran his TV production company, making programmes for the BBC and Channel 4, and networks in the USA. He still writes and produces TV shows.

It was the long, icy night stages I remember most, with cars looping through the Welsh forests. It took an immensely heavy toll. It was breathtaking to keep track of – so many cars were wiped out, including some big names: Walter Rohrl rolled his Audi and Bjorn Waldegaard's Toyota went off.

By the halfway stage, with Scotland, the Lake District, and the dreaded Kielder Forest still to go, Pond had driven brilliantly to split Alen and Toivonen.

Those remaining stages took a really heavy toll. Mikkola, Salonen, Pentti Airikkala, Grundel and Wilson all fell by the wayside. In fact, the final scoreboard was an extraordinary blend of old and new.

Toivonen and Alen had been dominant, taking a Lancia one-two, while Pond drove superbly to take third. Then we had Per Eklund storming to fourth in his Quattro, and Kankkunen in fifth for Toyota. And who do we find stealing onto the leaderboard in sixth and eighth? Those old warriors McRae and Brookes in their trusty Mantas.

So, undoubtedly an historic RAC Rally in my view. They don't often come better than that. ✪  
*William Woollard was talking to Henry Hope-Frost*

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## TECHNOLOGY OF CHAMPIONS

# Mobil 1™ Oil: An Aerodynamic Aid

*With exhaust-blown diffusers effectively a thing of the past, the Mobil 1 engine oil in the Vodafone McLaren Mercedes MP4-27 race car has enabled the team to increase rear downforce by improving aerodynamic performance.*

**Quest to be the Best** - Martin Whitmarsh, Team Principal, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, recently commented at the launch of the MP4-27, "While there are clear visual changes to this year's car, there's greater change beneath the skin, with lots of fresh thinking applied." With no stone left unturned in the quest to be the best, Mobil 1 engineers have developed a breakthrough engine oil for 2012 that allows a significant increase in the engine operating temperature.

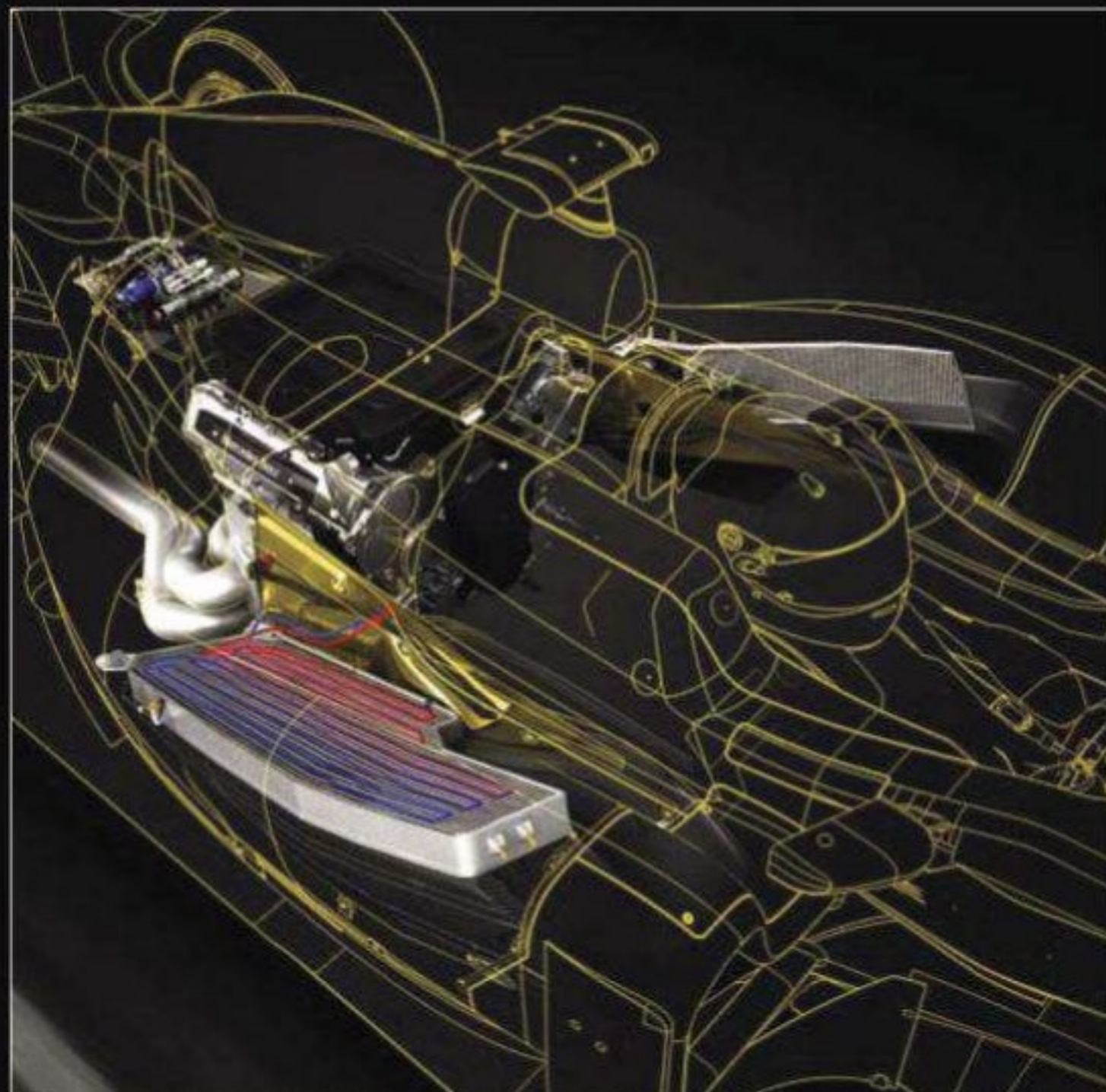
**Cool Performance** - The MP4-27 uses oil and water radiators to help cool the engine. Located in the right-hand side pod, the oil radiator and Mobil 1 technology provide an almost equal share of the engine cooling requirement.

**Running Hotter** - There are several advantages of being able to run the engine hotter. Drag can be reduced by re-optimization of the radiator and aero packaging. Increased rear downforce can also be achieved through aerodynamic improvements to the exit ducts.

**In to Win** - The excellent thermal performance of Mobil 1 technology is one feature that allows both higher operating temperatures whilst still protecting the engine and is a real advantage. When the winning margin can be fractions of a second, using the right engine oil can make the difference.



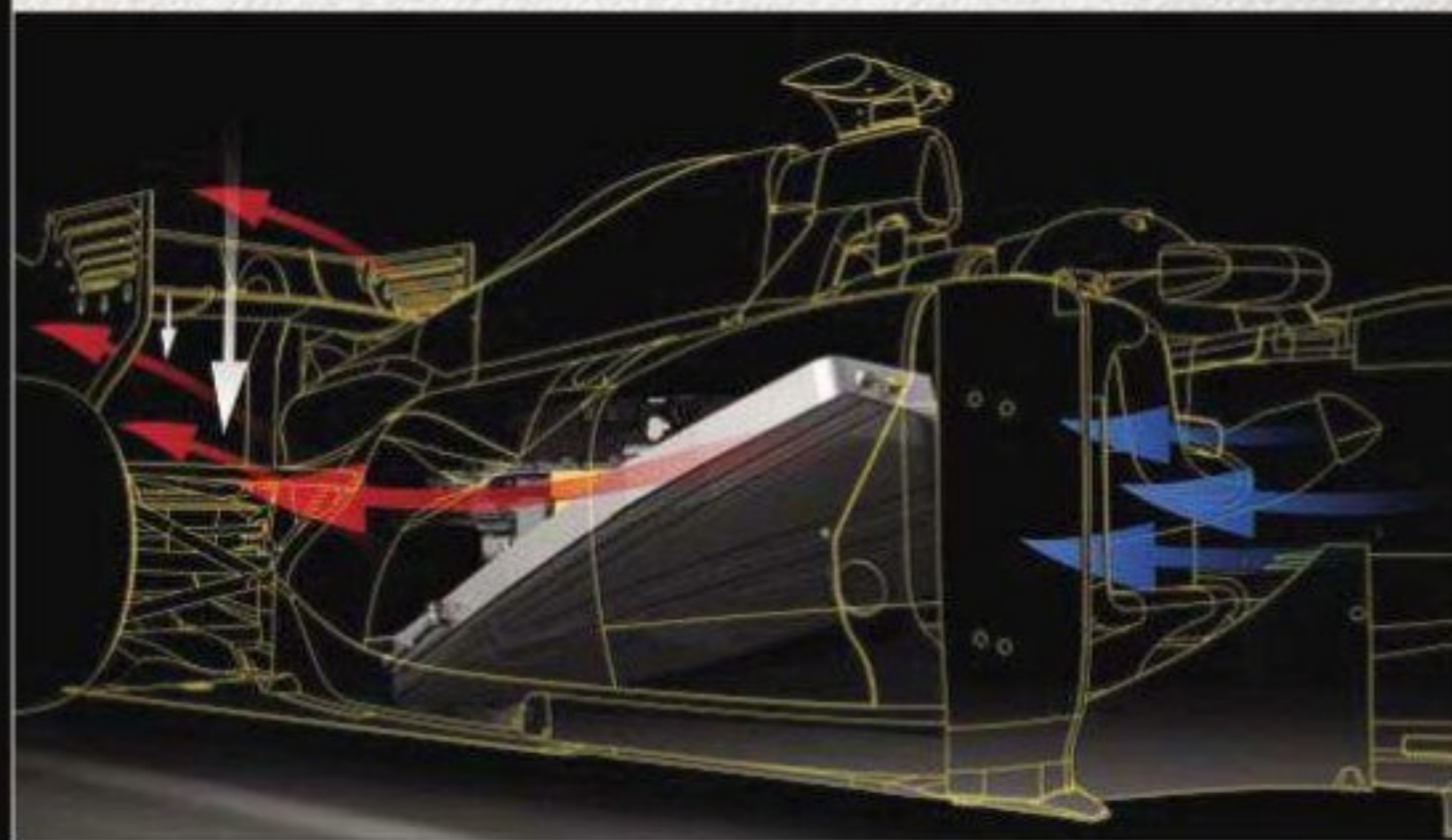
**Vodafone McLaren Mercedes  
Powered by Mobil 1 Engine Oil**



**Grand Prix Engine Oil Cooling Package Explained.** The Mobil 1 engine oil flows through the radiator cooling down by approximately 40°C, whilst the air channelled through the side pod inlet heats up about 75°C.

**Race Technology in Your Car** - The tough testing ground of Grand Prix racing provides the ideal environment for Mobil 1 engineers to develop advanced engine oils which can help optimize the performance of your car. Similar to the advancements in Grand Prix race cars, recent developments in road cars often put increased pressure on the oil in your car to perform. Mobil 1 synthetic engine oils are formulated to help keep your vehicle running like new. For more information on Mobil 1, the world's leading synthetic engine oil brand, visit [mobil1.com](http://mobil1.com)

**Side Pod.** Increased downforce and reduced drag equals faster lap times.



**MANY FANS. ONE OIL.** **Mobil 1**